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Vision for lottery fund use revealed

PLANS on how £1 million of lottery funding will be spent in three villages have taken a major step forward with the release of a "community vision" document.

The document has stemmed from two years of discussion and research by a team charged with delivering projects in St Martins, Weston Rhyn and Gobowen.

Funding will come from the Big Local lottery programme which will see £1 million spent in the three communities over 10 years.

Councillor David Lloyd, who represents the three parishes on Shropshire Council, said he was pleased to see progress being made on the programme.

The councillor said "It has taken a long time and people were beginning to ask serious questions but to produce a meaningful does take some time.

"I think having the community vision now is a positive step forward because it can be shared and progress with the public and with those who represent the communities.

"I am hoping this document will be viewed as a meaningful piece of work and will unlock the door to community partnership working."

Further details of what is planned will be available in a community plan due to be published in July.

Inquest into pond death

AN inquest is due to take place today (Thursday) into the death of a three-year-old boy who was found dead in a garden pond.

Harley-Lee Williams was found in a neighbour's pond in Froncysyllte, near Chirk, on December 9. The inquest was officially opened in December where it was established that Harley-Lee had died of drowning.

The hearing today will be held in Ruthin and be presided over by Wrexham coroner John Gittins.

OFSTED CRITICAL OF NEW SCHOOL

by Pam Kingsley

INSPECTORS have ordered improvements at a village school which was only formed last year.

St Martins School, near Oswestry, was created in September last year from Rhyn Park School and Performing Arts College, and Ifton Heath Primary School.

Prior to their closures inspectors judged Rhyn Park to be 'good' and Ifton Heath 'satisfactory'. But now Ofsted says the new school 'requires improvements' - which means they will keep a close eye on it in future.

The team of Ofsted inspectors who visited the new school at the end of March criticised lesson plans and timetables, which saw students studying some subjects for a whole day.

The report also said the quality of teaching was not good enough, especially in English and maths. The school went through an unsettled period during the amalgamation, with parents from Ifton Heath strongly opposed to the plan and the headteacher of St Martins school resigning just three months after the amalgamation.

Lead inspector Mary Davies said these issues were reflected in the current performance of the school.

"Although the acting principal has clearly identified priorities for improvement, the new strategies that have been introduced are not yet sufficiently established to have had a sustained impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning," she said.

Robust

Ms Davies said: "Governors expressed a determination that the school will be successful and have taken robust action to ensure the recent decline was halted.

"The students show great enthusiasm for learning and are keen to do well.

"This was particularly noticeable in some revision lessons where Year 11 students showed interest, enthusiasm and commitment despite the task being dull and not well matched to their abilities.

"They told us how much they value the school's efforts to ensure they succeed, and were keen to tell us how much the school has improved since January in terms of their well-being."

Sue Lovecy, who has been appointed as headteacher, said the report was much as she had expected it to be. She said: "The report recognises that the changes we've made since January have massively improved the school, and the children have said that to the inspectors. We're trying to build on that now.

"We've got excellent practice at the primary school and what we're looking at now is running that through the whole school."

Ladies to tackle Snowdon



Challengers Jan Phillips, Sheila Dixon, Angela Salter and Rachel Stevenson

FOUR adventurous ladies will be taking part in The Snowdon Charity Challenge next month in a bid to raise £2,000 for the Regain charity which provides help to individuals injured during sporting activity.

Jan Phillips, Sheila Dixon, Angela Salter and Rachel Stevenson, who are all from Llanymynech, will be cycling, climbing and canoeing on and around the mountain.

The bike ride covers 40 hill-strewn miles

and all three activities have to be completed on the same day.

The ladies have already raised about £1,000 through a pub quiz at the Bradford Arms and a Dawdle or Dash fun run, both in Llanymynech. Their next fundraiser will be a band and supper night at Kinnerley Village Hall on Saturday at 7.30pm. Tickets are £15 each including food.

For more information call 07788 488703.

Plans for houses near pub rejected

PLANS to build four homes near a village pub have been rejected after concerns from residents and parish councillors.

Kinnerley Parish Council and 25 villagers objected to the scheme which would have seen houses built at the Cross Keys Inn in the village, councillors at a meeting of Shropshire Council's north planning committee were told on Tuesday.

Resident representative Peter Clarke told the committee: "The Cross Keys inn occupies an important place visually and culturally in the village.

"We don't need any more houses, and even if we did we wouldn't have them near the pub.

"Most people in the village feel these houses are inappropriate."

Councillor Mick Bright from Kinnerley Parish Council said if built the houses would be an "eyesore".

The applicant Micheal Guest, who owns the Cross Keys Inn, said the pub was "sinking" and needed significant investment, which he argued the houses would bring.

He said if rejected then he may be forced to abandon the pub.

Councillor Vince Hunt said: "I think it is over-development and I don't like it."

National final spot for firm

AN Oswestry company which makes a range of precision-engineered bolts and screws for the construction industry has been named as a finalist in the search to find the UK's best business.

GWR Fasteners was named best small business in the West Midlands region in the Business Innovation category of the 2014 FSB WorldPay UK Business Awards.

The firm will now go onto the national final where it could win £10,000.

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Community order for man who punched girlfriend

by Andrew Morris

A MAN who punched his girlfriend three times to the face after a drinking session has been given a 12 month community order.

Christopher Williams, 52, of Parc Hafod, Four Crosses, near Welshpool, spent the afternoon drinking before attacking Jade Foster on March 1.

Williams, who admitted a charge of assault by beating, appeared at Welshpool Magistrates Court on Tuesday.

Williams was given the community order, which included 80 hours unpaid work and a restraining order, as well as being ordered to pay Miss Foster £500 compensation and court costs of £85.

He will also have to complete a respectful relationships workbook as part of the order.

Mr Matthew Ellis, prosecuting, said Williams had been drinking in the Cross Keys and Dolphin public houses in Llanymynech before heading home with Miss Foster. He said arguments had broken out in a taxi between the two pubs.

Mr Ellis said: "When they got in Miss Foster began eating a takeaway meal and an argument broke out. Williams pushed her to the floor. He then punched her to the face three times causing bruising and a cut lip."

"She asked to be let go and eventually Williams got off her and told her to pack her bags and leave."

"She did this and then walked out, with a friend picking her up shortly after."

Mr Huw Williams, for Williams, said his client was remorseful and would not be entering another relationship for some time.

He added: "I am grateful to probation for a good report on my client. He is remorseful and he will not be looking to get in a relationship now for some time."

Williams, who admitted a charge of assault by beating, appeared at Welshpool Magistrates Court on Tuesday.

Parishoners welcome new vicar



Rev Hughes, Bishop Gregory, the Archdeacon of Montgomery Peter Pike and Area Dean Pam Powell

A NEW priest has been welcomed as vicar of three parishes along the Shropshire-Powys border.

The Rev Richard Millree Hughes was commissioned to his new parishes in Llansilin, Llangedwyn and Llangadwaladr on April 30 by the Bishop of St Asaph, the Right Rev Dr Gregory Cameron.

Rev Hughes, who is married to Ann, served in the Diocese of Oxford prior to retirement and in retirement has assisted in the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe. His new appointment sees him based in the vicarage at Llansilin

and exercising a part-time ministry to the parishes and more widely in the Deanery of Mathrafal.

In his sermon the Bishop spoke of the different meanings the word 'home' has for people at the different stages of life. He particularly noted that Rev Hughes was very much coming home to the diocese of St Asaph where he had been ordained in 1958 and where he served in Mold, St Asaph and Towyn.

He added: "Richard's new appointment is even more significant in that his father, Richard Evan Hughes, was

vicar of Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant, and so his return to the Tanat Valley is very much a homecoming.

"Richard comes to us with a long track record of service in the ministry of the church and we welcome him now to the team in Mathrafal deanery."

Rev Hughes, who has four sons and a daughter, said: "The Holy Spirit has taken me to the strangest of places. On one occasion I found myself skirting the remains of dead tanks and missiles in the Judean wilderness, detritus of the 1967 Six Days War. At the age of 80 I have now come to Llansilin."

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Centre is offering chance to volunteer

RESIDENTS are being challenged to volunteer for local organisations by a centre which relies on volunteers.

Qube in Oswald Road, Oswestry will be running a series of workshops over the next few months to look at volunteering for people and organisations that are thinking of giving it a try.

The short workshop will inform people about the opportunities for volunteering in Oswestry and how you can help local charities.

Kim Thompson-Lawrence, Qube's volunteer co-ordinator, said: "There's no such thing as a 'typical' volunteer. People volunteer for all sorts of reasons. Some want work experience to give them a better chance of getting a job, others want a new interest or to meet people. Everyone's different and we encourage anyone who's ever thought about volunteering to come along."

Qube will also be running a series of workshops for organisations who place volunteers, to give them advice and guidance on how to attract volunteers and advertise opportunities.

The volunteering workshops will begin on May 15. For more details visit www.qube-oca.org.uk and to book a place on one of the workshops call (01691) 656882.

Cadets gain radio awards

FOUR RAF Cadets from 2364 Squadron at Welshpool have gained their Radio Communicator badges.

There are only eight of these in No2 Welsh Wing and all are from Welshpool squadron. The four are Cadets Doree, Shanahan, Matthews and Glover.

Decision expected soon on pedestrian crossing

By Iain St John

CAMPAIGNERS are likely to hear next month whether their long battle for a pedestrian crossing on a busy road in Shropshire has proved successful.

The campaigners want the crossing on St Martins Road in Gobowen.

They say the crossing will safely allow children to reach Gobowen Primary School which is on the nearby School Lane.

Police czar denies his role is not working

POLICE and crime commissioner Bill Longmore has hit back at MPs who said the high-profile role was failing to connect with the public.

Mr Longmore said he disagreed with a critical report by the House of Commons' Home Affairs Select Committee which said all commissioners should consider themselves "on probation".

The elected role was introduced nearly two years ago to make sure police forces in England and Wales are running effectively.

Commissioners have the power to appoint and fire chief constables and hold them to account for the behaviour of their officers and staff.

But nearly two years after the first commissioners were elected, the Committee said the case for the role had yet to be made.

Mr Longmore, West Mercia's police and crime commissioner, said he and his deputy Barrie Sheldon had achieved a great deal.

Gobowen grandmother Dot Basham has led the campaign and gathered hundreds of signatures on a petition calling for the road safety improvements.

Mrs Basham said the campaigners had hoped to have heard for definite by now whether the crossing was to be installed.

She said recent correspondence from Shropshire Council highways officers had indicated a decision was likely next month.

In the correspondence, officers say the current 2014/15 capital programme remains in draft at this time and Shropshire Council's cabinet will review it in June. They say they will only be able to confirm for definite whether the crossing is to go ahead once the draft capital programme has been reviewed and approved by cabinet.

Mrs Basham said: "The officers have been great and have kept me informed all the way but obviously it is getting a bit frustrating that we still don't have the crossing."

The campaigners' fight was given further impetus earlier late last year when 11-year-old Oliver Lloyd suffered serious injuries after being in collision with a car at the spot where the campaigners say the crossing should be built.

Defibrillator given to village school



Lucy Lightwood from Whittington Primary School, Anne Wilson from SEDS UK and instructor Clare Quigley

A PRIMARY school has been given a life saving piece of equipment in memory of a woman who died from Sudden Adult Death Syndrome.

The defibrillator was presented to Whittington Church of England Primary School, near Oswestry, by Anne Wilson in memory of her daughter Sue Yost who died in 1995.

And staff have now been trained in using the equipment, which works to restore the heart rhythm if a person goes into cardiac arrest.

The training was carried out by the West Midlands Ambulance Service

and seven staff attended the session.

School headteacher Sean Sibley said: "The training went really well. Now we're all trained up we're going to have it in the school at a central point."

Training

"We thought it was a good idea to have it, but then Anne got in contact with us and she did an assembly for the children and spoke to us about getting some training. We raised some money towards the cost of the defibrillator and now we know how to use it."

"It was surprisingly easy - I thought it would be far more complicated, but the machine tells you what to do."

The unit has been donated to the school as part of the SEDS UK Big Shock Campaign.

Anne Jolly, the founder of SEDS UK, said: "Anne has raised a lot of awareness in her community about the need for defibrillators in schools. Through her fundraising and generosity Whittington Primary School will now benefit from having a defibrillator, along with lifesaving training on school premises."

NEWS in brief

Bowling club is seeking members

A BOWLS club in Oswestry is looking for new members.

The Church Ladies Bowls Club meets every Tuesday afternoon at Church Bowls Green at the edge of Cae Glas Park, off Church Street in the centre of Oswestry.

Member Pat Mabe said: "We're a really friendly group of ladies who play bowls against each other and also have in-house competitions. We would welcome new members - beginners are very welcome, someone who has bowled in the past or experienced players. We play on one of the best kept greens in the Oswestry area and we look forward to seeing new members."

Call (01691) 659683 or (01691) 610400 for details.

Students tour recycling plant

STUDENTS from Walford & North Shropshire College have taken a tour of the Veolia Household Recycling Centre in Oswestry.

The tour was arranged to allow the students to complete the recycling topic in their portfolio.

During the tour of the facility, the group learnt where their recycling goes and what new products are made from it.

The students were given a guided tour by site supervisor John Welsby, site operative Alan Hughes and communications officer Angela James.

Rugby player's injury shock

WELSHPOOL Rugby Club stalwart Daley Jones is recovering in hospital after breaking his left ankle and leg on Saturday.

Jones was injured in the 27-10 defeat in the final home game of the season against Bangor.

Players and supporters have been shocked by the severity of the injury.

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NEWS

Wind farms will destroy tourism claim councillors

by Andrew Morris

THE building of windfarms and pylons across Mid Wales would destroy tourism in the region, councillors have claimed.

Fears were raised that the region would become “covered in windmills”, leading to the loss of millions of pounds in revenue brought by tourists.

Powys County Council’s planning committee met to discuss a report commissioned by the Welsh Assembly which warned of “tourism displacement” should developments go ahead.

And although principal planning officer Gwilym Davies said there were some “grey areas” from the report, member of the committee said they feared a huge impact.

Route shuts for work on lights

PART of the main road along the Oswestry to Welshpool road will be closed for two nights for repairs to the street lights.

The Highways Agency will be carrying out work to replace lighting cables on the A483 in Pant, near Oswestry, which started last night (Wednesday) for two weeks.

Most of the work will be carried out under temporary traffic lights, but the road will be closed on the nights of May 14 and 15 from 8pm to 6am, leading to a 26-mile diversion.

The work involves replacing faulty cabling on 10 lighting columns over a distance of about a quarter of a mile north of the junction of the A483 North Road and the B4398 in Pant.

Temporary traffic signals will be in operation during the daytime during off-peak hours of 9.30am to 4pm Monday to Thursday, and 9.30am to 3.30pm on Fridays. During the night-time closures traffic will be diverted along the A5 and the A458.

Powys County Council and campaign group The Alliance, is currently fighting plans to build windfarms in Llanbadarn Fynydd, near Llandrindod Wells; Llaith-ddu, near Newtown; Llandinam, near Llanidloes; Llanbryn-mair, near Machynlleth; Carnedd Wen, near Machynlleth, with a 132kV overhead electric line connection from a Llandinam windfarm to the Welshpool substation. The plans are subject to an ongoing public inquiry in Welshpool.

Councillor Huw Williams, member for Ystradgynlais, said: “In some areas such as Anglesey they are seen as an attraction, but not around here, I am sure it would put people off visiting. We need to stand up for our traders on this.”

Councillor Francesca Jump, member for Welshpool, said: “I am worried about the associated traffic which would come with the building of any windfarms in the area. It took me 45 minutes to travel the 14 miles between Welshpool and Newtown this week in normal traffic, so my goodness what will happen when massive lorries with wind turbine parts are coming through?”

“It will be a disaster for tourism as nobody will want to come and visit.”

Hospital treat from Millers



The Muddy Millers team arrive at the hospital with the Easter eggs

MEMBERS of a 4x4 driving club brought smiles to the faces of children in hospital when they presented them with Easter Eggs.

The Oswestry based Muddy Millers Off Road Club supports the children’s ward at the Orthopaedic Hospital.

Club members drove to the hospital with a large collection of chocolate eggs, donated by members and club supporters.

Leanne Davies, chairman, said: “The Muddy Millers have been going since 1997 and every year we collect Easter eggs for the children at the hospital.

“We always try to take them something nice to give them some smiles. The Orthopaedic Hospital has such a great reputation and because it is local to us we try and help out when we can.”

The club has about 40 members and organising monthly road trials and also green lane trips for rugged driving fans.

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Meeting called on problem school

TEACHERS at a failing school are determined to improve standards and make their school outstanding.

Ysgol Y Waun primary school in Chirk was given an 'unsatisfactory' grade across the board in an Estyn inspection – the Welsh equivalent of Ofsted – in February.

But staff have now pledged to make improvements and will be holding a meeting today (Thursday) to answer questions and outline the plans they have.

Councillor Ian Roberts, borough councillor for north Chirk and one of the school's governors, said one of the reasons for the poor report was the merging two schools.

The school was formed in 2012 following the amalgamation of the former infant and junior schools in Chirk.

"It's not going to be like this for long. There's a determined attitude and there's no way this staff are going to let this happen again," he said.

"I hope as many parents as possible will turn up," Councillor Roberts added.

The school was been placed in special measures following criticism of standards of teaching and achievement by inspectors, who agreed there were "unsatisfactory prospects for improvement".

Businessman fined over dumped waste

A BUSINESSMAN who dumped thousands of tonnes of waste from a new supermarket development on his land without a permit has been ordered to pay almost £70,000 in fines and costs.

Thomas Edward Jones must also remove the waste from the land at Knockin Heath, north of Shrewsbury, within the next six months.

Shrewsbury Crown Court was told that the waste, from the Tesco development in Welshpool, had been destined for recycling to help build the supermarket giant's new store at Cefn Mawr.

But that development was shelved when the land at Cefn Mawr was found to be a habitat for protected slow worms.

Jones, 69, of of Hopton, Nesscliffe, appeared at Shrewsbury Crown Court on Friday.

He admitted at an earlier hearing disposing of waste at Knockin Heath without an environmental licence and operating a waste disposal facility at the site without the necessary permit.

Judge Peter Barrie ordered that a similar charge in connection with the company Greyhound Plant lie

on the file after he heard it had gone into liquidation. And he recorded a not guilty verdict for a similar charge against Jones' son, Robert.

He fined Jones £24,000 and ordered him to pay £45,000 costs. Mr Timothy Green, prosecuting, told the court that Jones was a long standing businessman.

He said that between 2010 and 2013, 21,000 tonnes of subsoil, concrete and aggregate had been deposited on Jones' land at Knockin Heath without an environmental permit.

"It is estimated that £85,000 would have been saved in landfill charges," Mr Green said.

The material was the result of a £150,000 contract Jones had had to remove the waste from the old cattle market at Welshpool.

MBE for athletics coach



John Roberts is awarded an MBE by the Princess Royal

AN athletics coach from Oswestry has visited Buckingham Palace to pick up an MBE for his services to the sport.

John Roberts was recognised in the New Year Honours list, having been involved in athletics since the mid 1980s as a coach and official.

Mr Roberts began coaching at Southend on Sea Athletics Club in 1982, specialising in middle distance, and also began officiating as a starter and marksman.

He passed the preliminary examination to become a starter/marksman in 1987 and over the past 27 years has progressed through the sport.

When he retired he returned to Shropshire in 1999 and joined Oswestry Olympians Athletic Club. He was accepted as a Level 3 starter/marksman, the highest level officials can achieve, in 2004, and, now a septuagenarian, continues to officiate at Wrexham Amateur Athletic Club.

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BREEZE ABOUT TOWN

IF you are looking for a job, and not interested in signing a controversial zero-hours contract be prepared to see your benefits stopped. That's the latest crazy Government idea to ensure people get back to work. I wonder how many of our elected members have ever been faced with the prospect of such contracts.

People claiming Jobseeker's Allowance have been able to refuse to accept such jobs without facing penalties, but under Universal Credit, which is being rolled out gradually, people will have to accept the casual contracts.

Saying no means benefits will dry up and jobseekers will risk losing benefits if they turn down certain zero-hours contracts without good reason, the Government has said.

Zero-hours contracts, allowing employers to hire staff with no guarantee of work, are popular with company bosses because they offer flexibility. But the harsh facts are they leave workers with little financial stability or security, few employment rights and not enough work to make ends meet.

It is said that when workers do not get the hours they needed, their universal credit payments would adjust automatically to ensure they were financially supported. Well only time will tell on that one.

If Mr Cameron's party is looking to cut back on benefit payments it could do worse than to change the rules on payments to the thousands of immigrants claiming in the UK who are not interested in working.

What really amused me this week was a Facebook post by a friend bemoaning his position in the bathroom queue.

With five children he had found himself sixth in line for the bath-water at one time, but as each child left home he had moved up the rankings to find himself basking.

The bad news for my pal was that he soon found that as quickly as sons and daughters leave home, they come back again. Now he's dropped back down the pecking order and fresh water is a luxury he has quickly had to forget.

What would me up was discovering that care agencies were sending staff, who could not speak English, into vulnerable people's homes.

It's hard to imagine the situation but Care Minister Norman Lamb says communication skills will now be required for the Care Certificate.

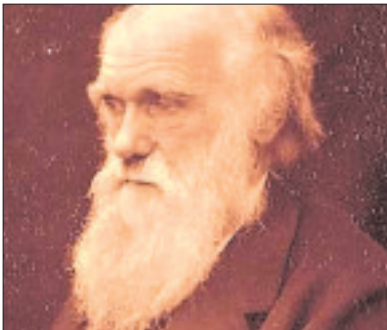
How can it be right for agencies to employ staff that have not grasped the English language?



Sent to live with an aunt – Clive of India



Eldest of four children – Wilfred Owen



Baptised in Shrewsbury – Charles Darwin

WORKING FOR YOU



Owen Paterson MP

Wind farms are a contentious issue locally and I have spent a great deal of time discussing their impact with many of my constituents.

Wind farms have been installed in inappropriate places, often with low levels of wind. It should be horses for courses. Wind farms may be appropriate in areas where local residents welcome them and there is significant wind.

This Government has recognised that subsidies have distorted the market for wind farms.

In recognition of this the Government has already reduced the subsidies and changed the planning guidance; local residents now have a real say and environmental criteria of landscape and heritage must be taken into account. However there is still some way to go.

Michael Fallon the Energy Minister has recently announced that should the Conservative Party win with a majority at the next election, the new Government would end any public subsidy for onshore wind beyond what is already planned in the pipeline and give local councils a decisive say in new wind farms.

Wind farms would be removed from the national infrastructure regime and would be determined by the locally-led planning system.

It's only fair that local residents should have the power to protect their local landscapes and decide whether a wind turbine would be appropriate in the area.

Most importantly household energy bills would not rise as a result of this policy. The amount of money bill payers contribute to renewable energy has been capped by the Levy Control Framework.

A Conservative win in 2015 would make wind developers stand on their own two feet instead of asking for money from the state and local people will have the final say on these applications.

Owen Paterson has been the Secretary of State for Environment since 2012 and the Member of Parliament (MP) for North Shropshire since 1997. He was first appointed to the Shadow Cabinet of David Cameron in 2007 as Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

A fascinating insight into Shropshire's most famous sons and daughters a click away, writes Lucy Todman

ONE of the biggest databases of parish history has been launched – revealing a fascinating insight into some of Shropshire most famous sons and daughters.

Spanning the years from 1538 to 1900, the Shropshire collection, which has been published by findmypast.co.uk comprises of approximately 2.1 million transcripts and records.

There are also 155,000 scanned colour images of the parish registers as well as a selection of Anglican, Methodist and Non-Conformist registers from well over 200 Shropshire parishes, from Abdon to Yockleton.

And hidden amongst the records are Charles Darwin, Wilfred Owen, Clive of India, hanging Judge Jeffries, and AE Housman.

A number of early industrialists such as John "Iron Mad" Wilkinson and Tom Farnolls Pritchard can also be found, reflecting the important role the county played in establishing Britain as an industrial powerhouse.

There are also 1,130,000 baptisms, 190,000 marriages, 20,000 banns and 790,000 burials

Chapel Charles Robert Darwin was born in Shrewsbury, on February 12, 1809 at his family home, The Mount. He was the fifth of six children of wealthy society doctor and financier Robert Darwin, and Susannah Darwin (née Wedgwood).

Robert Darwin, himself quietly a freethinker, had baby Charles baptised



Shrewsbury St Chad's parish register shows Darwin's 1809 baptism

in November 1809 in the Anglican St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury, but Charles and his siblings attended the Unitarian chapel with their mother.

Wilfred Owen was born on March 18, 1893 at Plas Wilmot, a house in Weston Lane, near Oswestry. He was of mixed English and Welsh ancestry and was the eldest of the four children of Thomas and Harriet Susan (née Shaw) Owen. His siblings were Harold, Colin, and Mary Millard Owen. He was baptised at Holy Trinity Church in Oswestry on April 8.

Robert Clive was born at Styche, the Clive family estate, near Market Drayton in Shropshire, on September 25, 1725 to Richard Clive and Rebecca Gaskell Clive.

The family had held the small estate since the time of Henry VII. Clive's father was known to have a temper,

which the boy apparently inherited. For reasons that have not been documented, Clive was sent to live with his mother's sister in Manchester while still a toddler.

George Jeffreys was born at the family estate of Acton Hall, on the outskirts of Wrexham, the sixth son of John and Margaret Jeffreys. His grandfather, John Jeffreys (died 1622), had been Chief Justice of the Anglesey circuit of the Great Sessions. His father, also John Jeffreys (1608-1691), was a Royalist during the English Civil War, but was reconciled to the Commonwealth and served as High Sheriff of Denbighshire in 1655.

George was educated at Shrewsbury School from 1652-1659. Jeffreys was knighted in 1677, became Recorder of London in 1678 and became Lord Chief Justice in 1683.

During his years in London in the 1890s, A. E. Housman completed A Shropshire Lad, a cycle of 63 poems. It has been in print continuously since May 1896. Housman died aged 77, in Cambridge. His ashes are buried near St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, Shropshire.

Debra Chatfield, a family historian at findmypast.co.uk, said: "The Shropshire Collection is one of the largest regional parish record collections we have ever published online and contains some truly wonderful gems."

Fascinating

"Family historians or people looking into their past, wherever they are in the world, can now search this historical goldmine and uncover the fascinating stories of their Shropshire ancestors."

"There is plenty of intrigue in the records to pique the interest of social historians, too. With our adjoining Cheshire and Welsh parish record collections already available, these records could prove invaluable to anyone with missing ancestors who may have crossed the border into Shropshire."

Tina Woodward, Shropshire Council's deputy cabinet member responsible for visitor economy, said: "Making these records available online for the first time is a great step forward for access to Shropshire's fantastic archives. We hope that people across the world will uncover Shropshire ancestors they never knew they had and renew their connection with our wonderful county."

The collection was launched to coincide with the Discover Shropshire day, which took place last Saturday and included local heritage organisations, speakers and musicians. To learn more about the records visit www.findmypast.co.uk. For further information about Shropshire Archives call (01743) 255350, email archives@shropshire.gov.uk, or visit the website www.shropshirearchives.org.uk




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MY EX-WIFE IS REFUSING ME ACCESS TO MY CHILDREN, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Q: After getting divorced last year I got a new place to live and have had my children to stay every weekend since then. My ex-wife has been fine about the arrangement up until a few weeks ago when my new partner moved in with me. Now my ex-wife has taken objection and is refusing to let me see our children because she doesn't like my new partner. What should I do?

A: If your ex-wife is refusing to give you access to your children you should go and see a family law specialist who will write to her on your behalf and try to reach an agreement. If this does not achieve a result your lawyer will make a referral to a local family mediator. The object of this exercise is to help you and your ex-wife to reach a mutually acceptable agreement by negotiation, through the mediator.

If your ex-wife refuses to attend the mediation appointment - which is voluntary, or if the mediation process breaks down, the next step would be to apply to the Court for a Contact Order which will set out the arrangements for when you and your children can see each other. As Court proceedings are lengthy, it is however preferable for separating spouses to reach an agreement without the Court's intervention in cases involving children.

Before instructing your lawyer to make an application to the Court you would either need to secure a public funding certificate (legal aid) from the Legal Aid Agency, or alternatively provide your lawyer with money on account of costs. As the rules for obtaining public funding changed in April 2013, you will need to check whether your circumstances fit within the eligibility criteria.

Further information relating to this question is available from Alison Monaghan, a Senior Solicitor with GHP Legal.
For information relating to any other legal matter please call GHP Legal on 01691 659194 or visit www.ghplegal.co.uk.
For Personal Injury and Family matters we offer a FREE legal diagnostic clinic every Wednesday 12-3pm (no appointment necessary). GHP Legal holds the Law Society Lexcel Quality Mark Accreditation



Pioneers fought deadly polio virus

ON April 25 1954, Randy Kerr, a six-year-old American boy, became the first person to receive the Polio vaccine. It followed a successful drug trial which saw the vaccine become mass produced and kick-started the eradication of the deadly virus.

Sixty years on, I would like to recognise the heroic work of these medical pioneers, however, with 120,000 people in the UK still suffering from the late effects of Polio and Post Polio Syndrome (PPS), more work is needed.

Between 1947 and 1958 polio claimed more than 3000 lives and disabled over 30,000 people and although the vaccine became available in 1962, millions in the UK didn't receive it till a while after the research was complete as many were unaware of Polio and the dangers those who contracted it faced. Many who survived Polio were left with, in the worse cases, total paralysis and at best wasted limbs and severe muscle fatigue.

If that wasn't enough, many survivors have to struggle with PPS, a debilitating neurological condition that up to 80 per cent of people who contracted Polio in earlier life can develop.

The British Polio Fellowship, celebrating its 75th anniversary, offers support to those suffering from Polio and PPS in the UK. Visit www.britishtopolio.org.uk or call 0800 018 0586.

TED HILL,
British Polio
Fellowship

Fireworks upset pets

I have lived in Maesbury Marsh since September 2013. I have a sensitive border collie and a cat.

Whilst watching television this week around 10pm, there was an almighty noise of bangs and "wees."

I now have two very frightened and traumatised animals.

Why can this country not ban the sale of fireworks to organised events only around the 5th November, it will prevent numerous frightened domestic and farm animals much trauma.

ESTHER DRYLAND
Maesbury Marsh

We will suffer if fracking allowed

THERE appears to be confusion about the question of fracking in north Shropshire and Cheshire. In the area under threat of exploratory drilling, fracking will not be immediately used.

Don't breathe a sigh of relief. Instead, the UK is being put forward as the guinea pig for large-scale extraction of coal bed methane and related gas. It is still a new way of extracting fossil fuels.

What is certain is that if exploratory drilling starts, we as the local people will not be able to stop it without a huge fight.

'Fracking' as a term is used by local campaigners as it is short and easier to say than coal bed methane extraction.

Extreme energy is another term and possibly a better one, as it expresses the desperation of a race which is killing its own planet with its hunger for easy energy at any price.

The price in this area will be a negative effect on our countryside, our clean water supply, our livestock and our children's health.

It is also not just one drill site here and one there, there has to be hundreds to extract and attempt to catch

the fossil fuel gases. We will be living in an industrial wasteland.

There is now no argument now among scientists about global warming; it is happening and we are to blame with our increasing use of fossil fuels.

By extracting these securely locked up sources of fossil fuels we will be directly contributing to our increasingly extreme weather patterns.

Don't be so naive as to think the little people will benefit, we never do.

T EVANS
Oswestry

Ladies at risk on town's Broad Street



Surely these ladies walking in Broad Street, Welshpool, were at risk of getting their light dresses dirty? And you don't need much imagination to realise what sort of stuff would be lying about in those days of horse-drawn traffic. The photo looks to be Edwardian and was loaned by postcard collector Sally Anne Richards

Time to be responsible on badgers

BADGERS have not always been at the top of the food chain and their numbers have only exploded since they have been protected.

Badgers do not live in a natural environment where nature can keep all creatures in balance.

They live in a man-made environment, where their natural predators have been eradicated by man's own population explosion. We have created this mess and it is now our responsibility to try and manage it.

Surely, for the sake of all creatures in this artificial environment, it is now our responsibility to control numbers from time to time? Perhaps the time for us to look at our own numbers is long overdue?

BARRY JONES
Churchstoke

LETTERS to the Editor

POST	FAX	E-MAIL
Readers' Letters, Oswestry Chronicle, Ketley, Telford, TF1 5HU	01952 254605	letters@oswestry chronicle.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters

Youth theatre put on fantastic production

MY wife and I attended the first night of the performance of Les Miserables by Shropshire youth theatre group, Get Your Wig On, at Theatre Severn. It was indeed our first attendance of an amateur group at the theatre. What a performance it was from start to finish.

We have seen several professional casts of this musical over the years and recently saw Beyond the Barricades at Theatre Severn, which featured professional performers singing some of the parts from Les Mis - but the youth production was by far the most entertaining performance.

Whilst not completely flawless, the performance was exhilarating, mainly because it came from the heart. We came out of the theatre with that feel-good factor.

BOB HENDERSON
Powys

Does there have to be a reason?

Mr Pitcher states (May 1) that atheists think life on this planet started as an "accident". The alternative is to believe that some sort of God planned and started it.

If we are to be limited to these two alternatives then I, and millions of others, prefer to think that the evidence set before us by eminent scientists shows conclusively that life may well have started as a result of critical chemical and biological conditions being met.

As for the "why are we here?" and "life after death" questions; these are typical nonsense questions engendered by the conceit of religious people of all types.

Does there have to be a reason for existence? Isn't one life enough?

R G CARTWRIGHT,
Crifftins,

Effort to rid paths of street clutter

STREET clutter like irresponsibly placed shop advertising signs (A-boards) and pavement cafe furniture can obstruct and hamper a person's progress.

Keeping paths clear is particularly crucial for the independence of people who are blind and partially sighted. A recent Guide Dogs survey for their Streets Ahead campaign showed A-boards and cafe furniture are both in the top ten most common street clutter items, acting as a real barrier to a person's independence. Shockingly, 65 per cent of those with sightloss have been injured by street clutter too. It also prevents wheelchair users and other vulnerable pedestrians from using the pavements with confidence.

Several local councils have already introduced measures to reduce unnecessary clutter. For example shops can use window adverts instead of multiple A-boards to entice customers and improve the street for pedestrians.

I would like your readers to join me in a campaign to ask the council to introduce measures to tackle unnecessary street clutter and ensure our high street is fully accessible to those who are blind or partially sighted. Please email campaigns@guidedogs.org.uk for more information about their campaign and survey findings.

ROB DAVIES
Via email

Providing a respite

THIS week is Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Awareness Week. This disabling neurological disease is most commonly diagnosed in young people aged 20-30?

Vitalise provides a respite lifeline for people with many different disabilities and their carers at our three accessible UK centres, enabling them to restore their strength and face life's daily challenges with renewed hope.

To find out more about our breaks or ways to support us, please visit: www.vitalise.org.uk, or call us on 0303 303 0147.

STEPHANIE STONE,
Vitalise.

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NEWS
in briefEnglish awards for
Moreton students

GIRLS from Moreton Hall school in Oswestry are celebrating after achieving the highest mark possible on their spoken English exams.

All girls in Year 12 attend an hour of spoken English lessons every week and in early April they all presented work for the English Speaking Board Advanced Certificate in Spoken English.

More than 20 pupils gained distinctions, the highest mark possible.

Head of spoken English Merriel Halsall-Williams said: "The Spoken English qualification is vital to the girls' development."

Concert to raise
funds for Trust trip

AN evening of music and words will be held at St John the Baptist Church in Ruyton XI Towns.

The concert, featuring the Grace Notes Quartet and friends, will take place on Saturday at 7.30pm to raise funds for the Project Trust.

It has been organised by Beth Vuckovic, who is fundraising for a trip to Senegal. She said: "Tickets will be £6 on the door and the money raised will go towards the cost of the trip."

Beth will also have a stall at West Felton fete on July 13.

Council bosses support a huge hike in parking fees

by Andrew Morris

COUNCIL bosses in Mid Wales have defended huge hikes in parking permit prices, claiming they still offer value for money.

Powys County Council has increased the prices of three, six and 12 month parking permits which are valid across the county by more than 50 per cent.

But the council, which is looking for savings of £20million this financial year, said the passes were still much cheaper than paying every day.

A county-wide three month permit for cars has increased from £40 to £75, a six month permit has gone up from £80 to £125, 12 month car and trailer permits are up from £180 to £270 and a six month version is now £150 instead of £95.

Permits for buses are up from £220 to £330.

Overnight stay permits for HGVs, buses and coaches are now £225, up from £150.

Councillor John Powell, portfolio holder for highways and environmental health, said the council is looking to maximise income wherever possible.

He added: "The council has had to deal with the most stringent budget settlements and had to look for savings totalling £20m within the 2014/15 financial year.

"As part of that budget settlement the cabinet looked to maximise income where possible to lessen the impact on the council's services.

"Increasing car park season tickets were included within the approved budget which full council approved on March 5.

"The annual car parking season tickets represent outstanding value for regular users of the council's off street long stay car parks.

"A 12 month permit for a car equates to only £4.33 per week at the revised process."

Comedian in school visit

A comedian, author, television script writer and one of the stars of Telford's annual pantomime gave a creative masterclass to pupils at a school in Oswestry.

Ian Billings visited Oswestry School to lead two creative writing workshops with pupils from Years 6 to 9.

Louise Worthington, head of careers and literature events co-ordinator at Oswestry School, said: "Ian was an inspiration. He joked around and encouraged the children to have fun whilst at the same time delivering brilliant tips and advice to improve their future creative writing.

"Everyone who took part learned so much and the pupils found the workshop riveting."

Pupils in Years 6 and 7 discovered the secrets of how to develop a compelling fictional character.

Residents are sitting pretty



Ray Phillips, Julie Lloyd, Kath Harper, Marion Collinson

RESIDENTS of a sheltered housing complex are sitting pretty on a new bench thanks to a partnership between youth offending bosses and housing chiefs.

The new bench has been given to the tenants of Monkmoor Court in Oswestry thanks to the skills of some of Shropshire's Youth Offending Team and funding from their local housing provider, Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing.

Tenants had applied for funding for the materials as they had no seating in the grounds.

The wooden bench was made by users of Shropshire's Youth Offending Service who worked with the local housing support officer to create the seating which overlooks the gardens.

Julie Lloyd, housing support officer at Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing, said: "The bench is lovely and gives residents a great place to relax or chat."

Rallying call from fracking meeting

ANTI-GAS drilling campaigners have issued a rallying cry to protect the countryside.

Members of Frack Free North Shropshire met last week to discuss a strategy for battling energy proposals for the north of the county.

The talks at Hermon Chapel in Oswestry followed a public meeting at the venue last month which heard claims that drilling could lead to the industrialisation of parts of Shropshire.

Duncan Kerr, from Frack Free North Shropshire, said: "What is clear is that we need to come together and fight these plans as a whole.

"In all different communities we need to support one another and protect our beautiful countryside.

"The last meeting went very well and we had members of Frack Off telling local people why they should campaign against the drilling plans and this has taken it a step further.

"We are now going to plan a campaign letter to send to people interested and they can then send it to Shropshire Council when plans are formally submitted in a bid to stop them going ahead."

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Long Term Weight Loss with Plan 2 Slim

Bodytech Health Clubs Oswestry is delighted to be bringing back PLAN 2 SLIM, its highly successful weight loss and wellbeing programme for a third term.

Plan 2 Slim - created by Bodytech's Jeff Anderson and local GP, Doctor Tim Lyttle - is a 10 week course designed to educate the nation in how to lose weight for good without the need of a fad diet.

Jeff Anderson said "Unlike many of the other slimming fads currently on the market who look to sell you a quick fix, we want to move away from the calorie reducing diets. We want to educate our clients that you can lose weight long term whilst still enjoying a variety of delicious food. Our past two courses have been a major success with almost 100% of participants losing a significant amount of weight".

The 10 week course, designed by experts in the fields of Fitness, Health, Nutrition and Psychology, is held on Wednesdays at 7:30pm at

Bodytech Health Clubs, Oswestry from the 21st May and cost just £60. Each week there is a short lecture on nutrition and exercise. The participants are weighed and then personally trained by the gyms fitness instructors. In addition each client gets a one hour one to one nutritional consultation and is given a diet plan to suit their individual needs.

Due to the flexible nature of the course participants can join Plan 2 Slim at any time, with their 10 weeks programme starting after induction.

For more information call the club on 01691 657400.



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Go-ahead for home to turn into flats

A RESIDENTIAL home which has been open for 30 years is to be turned into flats after the owner decided to retire.

Stanley Place, in Salop Road, Oswestry, is a home for the elderly with 13 bedrooms, but the owner, Pauline Edwards, is now looking forward to retirement and doesn't want to continue the business.

Planning permission was granted last week for the home, which now has fewer than 10 residents, to be converted into six flats.

Andrew Jones, Mrs Edwards's agent, said that the home was not really a viable business and so she had made the decision to close once she retires.

Mr Jones said the home was originally two large Victorian houses at one end of a terrace of four, and includes 13 bedrooms with associated sitting rooms and bathrooms.

The home will now be converted into six flats, with two on each floor of the original two houses.

Oswestry Town Council members had expressed concern that the change would lead to parking problems. But Mr Jones said that after meeting planning officers at Shropshire Council, the plans now include 10 parking spaces as well as a cycle

Bridge improvements to make canal accessible

A 200-year old 'roving bridge' built by Thomas Telford is being updated to make it easier for cyclists and people with mobility scooters or pushchairs to cross a canal.

The work is one of two projects being carried out at the Llangollen Canal to make it more accessible to visitors.

Work has also started on the resurfacing of a stretch of towpath in Llangollen.

Postles Bridge, in Trevor, near Oswestry, is a 19th century 'roving bridge' that was constructed to allow horses, towing laden canal boats, to cross the canal without the need to be unhitched.

Located immediately next to Trevor Basin in the World Heritage Site it forms a key link between this site and the canal corridor through to Llangollen.

Access from Postles Bridge back onto the towpath is currently via a cobbled ramp, which runs parallel to the canal with a steep turn at the foot of the slope.

The project, which should be completed by the end of May, will construct a new ramp from the bridge to meet current disability requirements, and will make the canal from Trevor Basin to Llangollen Wharf fully accessible to everyone.

by Iain St John

The projects are being supported with funding from the players of the Peoples Postcode Lottery, WREN Community Landfill Tax, Northern Marches Cymru Rural Development Programme (ERDF), Wrexham County Borough Council, Taith Sustainable Transport, Denbighshire County Council and Sustrans Cymru.

As part of the project, Glandŵr Cymru commissioned Phil Chambers, an independent countryside and heritage consultant, and expert on wheelchair and accessibility issues, to undertake an access audit and provide recommendations to enable better access for all.

The towpath improvements will include widening and resurfacing 1,500 metres of towpath.

Unique event to support hospice



The Gift Experience team from Ellesmere

FOOTBALL and zorbing might not be a natural mix, but a unique event combining the two is being organised to raise money for Hope House.

The Gift Experience in Ellesmere have signed up to take part in the latest craze to raise vital money for Hope House Children's Hospices.

Football and zorbing, which is rolling around in a giant inflatable orb, will unite with hilarious consequences at the Hope House World Cup Bubble Football five-a-side tournaments on June 8.

Lynsey Kilvert, Hope House area fundraiser, said: "We are appealing for further enthusiastic teams to bounce off the competition and battle it out with The Gift Experience to be crowned Hope House World Cup Bubble Football champions."

Entry is just £50 per team of five or six players and teams are asked to raise a minimum of £150.

NEWS in brief

Figures showing decrease in crime

CRIME in the region plummeted by more than 10 per cent last year, according to newly released figures.

The number of crimes reported to West Mercia Police fell from 63,362 in 2012 to 57,016 in 2013.

According to the figures in the Crime Survey for England and Wales, published by the Office for National Statistics, violent crimes resulting in injury in the area dropped from 6,770 in 2012 to 5,856 in 2013.

Sexual offences were down from 1,319 to 1,237, while the number of reported robberies was down from 430 to 349. Burglaries were also down 11 per cent.

Police seeking chicken thieves

A FLOCK of chickens were stolen when thieves broke into their coop near Oswestry.

Police spokesman Richard Ewels said: "Between 8.10pm on April 24 and 8.20am on April 25, a garden has been entered at a home in Maesbury Marsh, near Oswestry."

"A chicken coop in the garden has been broken into and 12 chickens stolen."

Anyone with information about the theft is asked to contact Oswestry police station on 101 or the anonymous Crimestoppers charity on 0800 555 111.

Visit: www.gotothevenue.com | Tel: 01691 684840 | [f](#) [t](#)

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NEWS
in brief

Earlier start for canal triathlon

THE start time of Saturday's Montgomery Canal Triathlon has been brought forward due to a huge number of entries.

Over 250 cyclists – double last year's number – are expected to take part in the first section of the 35-mile event which leaves Severn Way in Newtown at the earlier time of 8.30am.

Canoists will be leaving Welshpool Town Wharf sometime after 9.30am to make their way to Llanymynech and then walk or run to the end of the canal at Frankton Locks.

Further details are available from Peter Richards, Friends of the Montgomery Canal, on 01691 831455.

Driving course for boy racers

AROUND 20 young drivers have attended a "Drive Safe" event in Welshpool after police reacted to reports from members of the public about boy racers.

Drive Safe is an initiative which aims to provide positive engagement with young drivers aged between 17 and 24 years old.

Officers from Welshpool Neighbourhood Policing Team, MAWW Fire & Rescue and Powys County Council Road Safety attended to talk to young drivers from the Welshpool and surrounding area.

Police attend 19 knife call-outs at town court

by Andrew Moris

POLICE have been called to Welshpool Magistrates Court 19 times in the last three years to deal with members of the public carrying knives.

Pc Natalie Wareing said Dyfed-Powys Police had dealt with a number of people attending the court while in possession of a lock knife.

She said that while the knives are not illegal, it is illegal to carry them in a public place.

One advocate who works at the court, but did not wish to be named, said: "It seems a high figure and I can't believe people would be so foolish to carry a knife to court with them. You have to pass through security at every court in the country and you will get caught and no doubt end up in more trouble."

Pc Wareing said: "While knife crime is not a problem in the area, police in Welshpool wish to raise awareness of the law relating to the carrying of a certain type of knife, a lock knife, in a public place."

"In the last three years police have been called on 19 occasions to reports of members of the public attending Welshpool court and found to be in possession of lock knives."

"The knives are readily available for purchase from outlet stores. However, while it is not illegal to sell such items, it is illegal to be in possession of them in a public place."

"It is illegal to carry any sharp or bladed instrument in a public place with the exception of a folding pocket knife, which has a blade that is less than 7.62cm (3in)."

One advocate who works at the court said: "It seems a high figure and I can't believe people would be so foolish to carry a knife to court with them. You have to pass through security at every court in the country and you will get caught."

Footballers' chance to play

RECENTLY formed Forden United Juniors FC will be holding a "Turn Up & Play" session at the Community Sportsfield behind Forden School on Saturday morning at 10am.

There will be fun football activities targeting boys and girls who are currently in primary school.

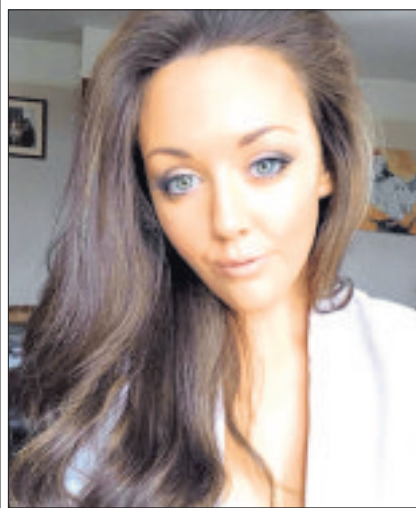
It is a perfect way to get your kids active and the sessions will be delivered by qualified coaches within a safe environment where the emphasis is on having fun.

This will be a weekly session costing only £1.50 for an hour.

With enough interest, the club intends to enter age-group teams into the local league who could ultimately provide the senior team of Forden United with players.

Information is available at the club's Facebook page at "Forden United Juniors FC".

Lois seeking beauty title



Lois Williams hoping to be crowned Miss International

AN opera singer has turned beauty queen after making the final of Miss International UK.

Lois Williams, 20, from Welshpool, is used to performing in front of a crowd, but will be swapping the microphone for the catwalk as she bids to win the title.

Miss Williams, who has been singing since she was nine, also works as a beauty therapist.

She said she is honoured to have been given the Miss Powys International title and hopes to scoop the big prize at the finals to be held in July.

She said: "I began singing when I was nine so it has been pretty much for as long as I can remember."

The final will be held at The Palace Hotel in Manchester on July 13 and the winner will be given an all expenses paid trip to compete in the Miss International pageant held in Japan.

Farm is on the market for £2.7m

A prize-winning Welshpool livestock farm is on the market for £2.7 million.

Cefn Du, Cyfrnydd, comprises a substantial Grade II listed farmhouse, a comprehensive range of mainly modern livestock buildings and 303.47 acres of productive land.

The farm is being sold on behalf of Glyn and Eileen Robinson by joint agents Halls and Norman Lloyd. Last year, Cefn Du was judged to have the best beef herd as well as the most well managed farm of over 250 acres in Montgomeryshire.

Mr and Mrs Robinson have developed a highly regarded pedigree and purebred herd of Limousin cattle and their sheep enterprise extends to around 750 ewes. Around 20 acres of land is used for arable or root crops with the remainder high quality pastureland.

Of particular note is the farmhouse, which is believed to date back to the late 16th or early 17th centuries and possesses a wealth of exposed beams and other original features together with five bedrooms.

Viewing is by appointment with the Welshpool offices of Halls on Tel: 01938 555552 or Norman Lloyd on Tel: 01938 552371.

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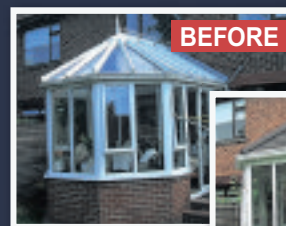
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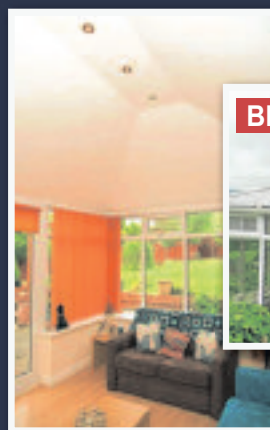
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Plan for betting shop is dismissed

An appeal against a decision to refuse permission for a betting shop to open on a high street in Mid Wales has been thrown out.

William Hill wanted to open at the former Stead & Simpson shop in Broad Street, Welshpool, but Powys County Council's planning committee refused permission earlier this year.

The betting firm lodged an appeal against the decision with the Welsh Assembly, but its inspector, Peter Horridge, dismissed the appeal saying it would not be suitable in the location.

Mr Horridge said: "At issue are the effects of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Welshpool Conservation Area and on the vitality and viability of the town centre."

"The Welshpool Conservation Area covers much of the historic centre of the town. It is characterised by the age and variety of buildings within it. The concentration of retail premises and the varied appearance of their shopfronts add to this character."

"The nub of the appeal is the loss of an A1 retail shop and the effect that this would have on the vitality and viability of the shopping area in primary shopping frontages such as this."

Six vehicle smash outside meeting on one-way road

A six car pile-up waylaid a meeting to discuss concerns about a one-way system through Welshpool.

The multi-car crash happened on Broad Street just as residents were filing in for a Welshpool Llanerchydol community meeting held by MP for Montgomeryshire Glyn Davies.

In what the MP called a "huge coincidence" residents had indicated they wanted to voice concerns over the one way system and the crashes meant the subject dominated the meeting.

Six cars were damaged and one person taken to hospital after the collision at about 5pm on Friday. It involved cars parked outside Stead & Simpson and McCartney's estate agent and cars travelling towards High Street.

Closed

The road was closed for about half an hour while emergency services cleared the scene.

It was reopened by 5.30pm with a one lane restriction.

Mr Davies said: "I had called a public meeting so that anyone in Welshpool could come to tell me any problems they had. As it happened I think people

by Jennifer Meierhans

were coming to express their dislike of the system.

"And by huge co-incidence there was a pretty serious smash in the street outside just before the meeting."

"So as people were coming into the meeting it looked like a banger car racing track outside."

"A 4X4 had crashed into about four other vehicles. It's a miracle no one was standing there as they could have been killed."

"Witnesses told me that they thought the one way system was a contributing factor but I think we should wait until the police have written their report."

"Inevitably it was dominant issue at my Welshpool Llanerchydol community meeting."

"Personally I've always thought this system completely bonkers."



Traffic builds up as emergency service deal with the six car pile-up in Welshpool

NEWS in brief

Woman cut free from crash car

A woman was cut out of her vehicle and taken to hospital following a six-car crash near Welshpool.

The crash happened on the A483 at Berriew at about 2pm last Thursday and the woman was taken to Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.

A spokeswoman for Mid & West Wales Fire and Rescue Service said: "We attended the scene of a six-car collision on the A483 at Berriew yesterday."

"Crews from Welshpool attended and assisted in removing a woman from her vehicle who was then taken to hospital for treatment."

"The road was clear again by 2.40pm."

Chance to win tour of gardens

YOU could win an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of the world-famous gardens at Powis Castle.

You would be joined by the head gardener and can even take some cuttings from plants and flowers.

Entrants must submit a photograph of their favourite garden to the National Trust, who will select their favourite from all entries received by Friday, May 30.

You can enter by: the website at: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/Wales or by post at: National Trust Money Can't Buy Competition, Chirk Castle, Chirk, Wrexham, LL14 5AF

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NEWS
in brief

Charge for diesel spill is written off

A BILL for £2,500 owed to the county fire service for clearing up a diesel spill four years ago has been written off because it was costing too much public money to pursue the offender.

The spillage took place in 2010, but both the vehicle's owners and their insurers have failed to pay up.

During a meeting of Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority chief fire officer John Redmond said the department was left with no choice but to write off the debt.

"This is only the second time such a thing has happened in 13 years," he said.

Council overspend down to £600,000

THE county council has reduced its projected overspend for the last financial year by almost £1.4 million to under £600,000 according to figures revealed.

Shropshire Council figures discussed at a cabinet meeting in Shirehall showed that its latest figures for the end of February showed a project overspend of £588,000 for the 2013/14 financial year on its gross budget of £645 million.

The figure represents a major reduction on the expected overspend forecast last month of £1.942 million.

College opening up first outdoor satellite campus

AN Oswestry college is to open a satellite centre where students will be taught outdoors.

Derwen College, at Gobowen, is opening a satellite centre at Higher Penley near Ellesmere later this year.

It will be called Ashdale House and it will be the first of three similar campuses that are planned to be open by next spring.

The college provides vocational education for young adults with learning disabilities and difficulties.

It offers education and vocational qualifications from catering to crafts, retail and horticulture.

Nicola Vine, from Derwen College, said: "Courses will involve learning a range of work-based activities in horticulture and conservation as well as art and craft, English, Maths and IT skills. The students will also learn personal, social and independence skills.

"All of this will be done in small groups in an outdoor environment."

"Ashdale House is a wonderful asset for Derwen College and there are some very exciting opportunities.

"Inside the house students will be able to cook and prepare meals for themselves and also do a small amount of classroom-based work.

"There are wonderful out-buildings for art and craft work and the garden is ideal for horticultural activities.

"We also have fields that can also be used for conservation work and for land based studies. We are currently looking at what crops could be grown. These might even include lavender, which we could then incorporate into our crafts."

She added: "Derwen will be opening a similar land-based pathway in Walford and North Shropshire College's Walford campus in September 2014 and it is looking for a suitable property in the south of Shropshire with a planned opening in Spring 2015."

Open days are being held at Ashfield House to give social workers, careers advisers and special educational needs coordinators the chance to get an idea of how the centre will run.

Young footballers meeting stars



Young footballers meet up with England goalkeepers at Arthurs of Oswestry

YOUNG members of a football club met some of their England heroes when they dropped in to Oswestry ahead of their World Cup qualifier against Ukraine.

England goalkeepers Karen Bardley and Siobhan Chamberlain spent

time meeting and answering questions from Oswestry Boys & Girls Club members at Arthurs Garage.

The pair presented the young players, including Oswestry U10 girls, with a new kit, provided by Vauxhall, and offered top tips to the youngsters.

And then the young players had the chance to quiz the pair on their careers, best advice for becoming a professional, and how many goals they had saved. Both were in town ahead of the England match, which will be held tonight (Thursday) at Shrewsbury.

Home of former Lord still on market

THE ancestral home of one of Oswestry's best known political figures remains on the market four months after it was put up for sale.

The Grade II listed hall and more than 200 acres of farm and parkland on the Brogyntyn Estate on the edge of Oswestry has a price tag of £500,000.

It was once the seat of the Ormsby-Gore family, whose most famous member was William David Ormsby-Gore, the fifth Baron Harlech. Lord Harlech was British Ambassador to America and a friend of President John F Kennedy.

But the current Lord Harlech sold the estate more than a decade ago after it lay empty for 15 years.

Jonathan Bengough, from agent Knight Frank, said there had been plenty of interest in the estate but it was still on the market.

The estate includes parkland, a walled garden and former terraced gardens, a stable block, a lodge cottage and a gardener's cottage.

There is also a range of period farm buildings, a former shooting lodge, two lakes and woodland and pasture land. There is even the remains of an iron age hill fort, and a 12th century fortress, Castell Brogyntyn, and views from the estate take in four counties.



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OSWESTRY EVENT HIGHLIGHTS 2014

- 16th May - Antique Fair** - Brand new event for 2014. A huge collection of antique stalls situated throughout the town.
- 24th May - Continental Market** - A superb selection of food and craft stalls from all over Europe located within the town centre.
- 6th June & 12th Sept' Charity Market** - Local charities come to the markets areas selling goods to raise funds. 9am until 3pm Bailey Head.
- 12th and 13th July - Oswestry Food and Drink Festival** - Huge annual event with the best food and drink producers in Shropshire located throughout the town centre. **FREE admission.**
- 5th and 6th September - Continental Market** - A superb selection of food and craft stalls from all over Europe located within the town centre.
- 13th September - Heritage Market** - Visit the Victorian market on the Bailey Head. Fun for the whole family. heritageopendays.org.uk

BANDS IN THE PARK SUNDAYS 2PM - 4PM

- 1st June**
Shrewsbury Brass
- 8th June**
PVC - Chilled Sunday
- 15th June**
Bradley Brass
- 6th July**
Porthywaen
Silver Band
- 13th July (12 - 5pm)**
Reggae in the Park
- 20th July**
Ifton Brass Band
- 3rd August**
Telford Brass Band
- 17th August**
Oswestry
Street Band

ALL
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25th October - Halloween Market - Lots of scary goings on at Oswestry's Bailey Head. Face Painting, rides, games & prizes!

1st November - Bonfire & Firework Display - Huge annual event! Massive firework display from 6pm Brogyntyn Park Oswestry.

20th November - Christmas Light Switch-on - Christmas has arrived! Local school choirs and performers celebrate the switching on of the lights on the Bailey Head from 4pm. Great family event.

5th December - Oswestry Christmas Music Live - Huge annual event Fair ground rides, ice rink, music stage, Christmas market, fireworks, Santa's Grotto and lots lots more. Late night shopping. 6pm - 10pm.

6th December - Oswestry Parade - Throughout Oswestry from 11am.

14th December - Oswestry Christmas Market - Throughout town and the Bailey Head. From 11am - 3pm.

19th December - Oswestry Christmas Farmers' Market - 9am - 3pm

**For More Information Contact
Oswestry Town Council: 01691 680222**



LOVE YOUR MARKET

Reception in Commons for Local Market Week

Advertising feature

OSWESTRY Town Council this week helped organise the launch reception for Love Your Local Market 2014 on the terrace at the House of Commons on behalf of the National Association of British Market Authorities.

North Shropshire MP Owen Paterson joined Councillor John Gareth Jones, Oswestry Mayor Elect, and Councillor Mrs Cynthia Hawksley the chairwoman of the council's markets and car parks committee, for the launch.

LYLM is a celebration of British Markets over a fortnight in May, and this year Oswestry Markets will be celebrating this fortnight by holding a youth market on May 14, an antiques market on May 16 and a continental market on May 24.

Started in 2012 amidst fears around the sustainability of our nation's high streets, LYLM participants have staged over 4,000 events, while highlighting the importance that our market plays in the heart of our communities, not only for retail but as valuable community assets that provide a focal point.

LYLM is also about entrepreneurship and helping people start a new business. The campaign aims to encourage people to get behind their markets by highlighting their importance to the local economy and community.

Graham Wilson OBE, chief executive of the National Association of British Market Authorities, said:



Owen Paterson with Councillor John Gareth Jones and Cynthia Hawksley

"Love Your Local Market is the biggest market event in a generation. It gives people the chance of a new career and demonstrates how important the market is to the local community."

This year Oswestry will be joining over 700 markets across the country by taking part in LYLM and is offering free pitches for charities and en-

trepreneurs, as well as involving local schools and colleges in order to highlight the importance of markets.

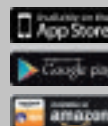
Already the Derwen College, Walford and North Shropshire College, the Marches, the Youth Cafe and The Centre are taking part. Anyone wishing to get involved can call David Clough on (01691) 680222



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Free infants meals on schedule for all county schools say bosses

Garden designer is setting her sights on the top prize



Designer Teresa Rham chooses plants for her imaginative show garden

A GARDEN designer from Oswestry has her eyes on the prize as she is preparing to display at the RHS Malvern Spring Festival.

Teresa Rham, from Grounddesigns at Middleton, near Oswestry, will be creating a show garden entitled "Ooooh....It Makes Me Wonder" which will sit alongside eight other show gardens at the event that takes place from May 8 until May 11 at the Three Counties Showground, in Malvern, Worcestershire. She and a team of workers have spent the past week at the showground starting work on the garden, building a tower and setting out the boundary wall.

The finished garden will be 8.5m square, with plants arranged in geometric shapes.

"The garden is inspired by the title of the classic Led Zeppelin song Stairway to Heaven and the Giant's Causeway rock for-

mation," she said.

"The hard landscaping features four gently inclined pathways that take the traveller on towards the next destination, with seats along the way on which to pause and reflect. "The planting scheme includes dark flowers and foliage in the corners of the garden and becomes brighter and lighter as the traveller continues on their journey."

Teresa is no stranger to the challenge of creating an award-winning garden. Last year she scooped a Silver Gilt medal for her Tour de France-themed show garden at the RHS Malvern Spring Festival.

And she has recently produced maintenance plans and an enclosed garden for use by cancer patients at a new tumour unit in the grounds of Oswestry's orthopaedic hospital, as well as working with Telford Town Park to create a sensory garden.

Sightseeing weekend for French twin town visitors

A PARTY of French visitors has returned home after spending a long weekend exploring part of Shropshire.

The group of 33 people from Combs la Ville – a town in the suburbs of Paris – was paying a visit to Oswestry as part of the towns' twinning partnership.

David Davies, chairman of Oswestry Twinning Association, said: "Thursday saw us setting off for Port Sunlight, the 'garden city' town built by the Lever family on the Wirral to provide homes for the workers at their soap factory. The family being Quakers as long ago as 1888

believed in looking after their employees, so they built a pleasant place to live in.

"From Port Sunlight we headed for lunch in Chester, the afternoon being spent on a wall walk, town tour or shopping therapy.

"Friday proved to be another busy day starting with a visit to The Secret Bunker. From there we went to Stoke on Trent, having lunch at the Moat House hotel, built on the side of Josiah Wedgwood's house giving us an opportunity to visit his study.

"The afternoon was spent at Etruria Industrial Mu-

seum, a flint and bone mill, where after a talk about its history we had a guided tour.

"Saturday was a day to rest and explore Oswestry with the host families before a farewell dinner in the evening attended by our Mayor Councillor Chris Schofield and his wife Val."

The Twinning Association of Oswestry is a voluntary group that aims to foster friendship between the families of the two towns.

Anyone interested in joining the group can contact Mr Davies on (01691) 650246 or email oswestry_twinning@btinternet.com

FEARS schools will not be ready to roll out free school meals across Shropshire are unfounded, council bosses have assured.

Everything is in place for the government's universal infants free school meals scheme to go ahead from September, despite fears kitchens, staff and catering services might not be ready or able to cope with the anticipated massive increase in demand.

Trial runs and talks with school heads have ironed out concerns, Shropshire Council bosses have said, and the county is in a "much better position" than some neighbouring authorities.

Councillor Joyce Barrow, chair of Shropshire Council's young people's scrutiny committee, said she had been pleasantly surprised by the progress made by council officers and schools.

She said: "Shropshire Council is in a very good position. "Unlike places like Herefordshire and Worcestershire the majority of our schools already have kitchens in place. We did have concerns that at some of the larger schools the number of meals would increase hugely, but we did a trial run at Sundorne to see how it would fit in and it was fine."

She said new equipment had already been delivered to some schools and officers had spoken to the head teachers of all schools to iron out any concerns.

"Everything is in place and everything will be ready to go by September. It's good news," she said.

From September, all state funded infant

by Thomas Morton

school-aged children (reception, year 1 and year 2) will be eligible to receive a free school meal.

Shropshire Council's young people's scrutiny committee will be considering a report by Shire Services manager Janet Croft at a Shirehall meeting on April 30 on how prepared Shropshire schools were to start the scheme.

Shire Services currently provides catering services to 112 primary schools in Shropshire and anticipates an increase of 3,192 meals per day, an increase of 40 per cent. It also provides a school meals service to three infant schools, one in Ludlow, and Woodfield and Sundorne in Shrewsbury, at which a "significant increase" is expected in the number of meals provided.

The scheme will cost £662,822 in Shropshire, with 79 schools qualifying for additional funding of £390,000, or a minimum of £3,000 per school, the report says.

Owen Paterson urged to 'save our grassland'

A PETITION calling for the better protection of the nation's grasslands has been handed over to Environment Secretary Owen Paterson.

More than 7,000 signatures have been collected by the Wildlife Trusts through an e-petition over the last few weeks.

The petition was handed to the North Shropshire MP at The Boathouse in Ellesmere on Saturday by Shropshire Wildlife Trust's chief executive Colin Preston and chairman of the Ellesmere branch of the trust Cath Price.

Sarah Gibson, spokesman for Shropshire Wildlife Trust, said: "Flower-rich grasslands are under threat from development, changes in land use and farming practices, neglect and mismanagement.

"Wildlife-rich grasslands have often developed over hundreds of years, rich tapestries of plants which are vital for bees, butterflies and other insects.

"Undisturbed grassland is ideal for hunting barn owls and other wildlife; for securing soils and enabling landscapes to hold and filter water, preventing flooding and pollution and for carbon storage. These beautiful and valuable habitats are vanishing and the dazzling array of species that depend on them are under threat."

The government is currently making decisions on how it will implement the greening measures of the Common Agricultural Policy and how it will target grants to farmers in the future.

The Wildlife Trusts are calling for a full review of existing protection for environmentally valuable grasslands and asking the government to improve existing laws and policies and effectively enforce them.

After receiving the petition Mr Paterson said: "We are fully aware of the value of our grasslands and are bearing them in mind when we look at reform."

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FARMING

Wool market is on agenda for farmers



Oswestry farmer Malcolm Roberts, who has helped organise the meeting

LIVESTOCK farmers will be at Oswestry for a meeting which will analyse the wool market and discuss changes to the rules on moving stock.

The British Wool Marketing Board, BWMB, and National Farmers' Union, NFU, will host the meeting at Oswestry Showground on May 15 between noon and 2.30pm.

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board will talk to farmers about improving wool prices and how they can best market their wool which is a natural, long-lasting, bio-degradable, green commodity.

Allflex and the NFU will discuss sheep movements as farmers were given a choice, from April 1, as to how stock movements should be recorded, with Park Issa vets discussing latest updates on sheep diseases and medicines.

The latest sheep husbandry methods and electronic sheep tagging news will be on the agenda at the event which is also supported by Alltech, Park Issa Vets and Wynnstay Group.

The meeting is open to all livestock farmers, will be on from noon to 2.30pm, and refreshments will be provided including lunch which will include locally sourced beef.

For further details and to book a place, please call Stuart Chacksfield or Alex Bond at the NFU Oswestry office on (01691) 652120.

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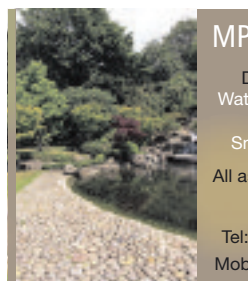
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FORD KUGA
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INSIDE: LATEST NEWS FROM SHROPSHIRE FORECOURTS



Love it or hate it but this Kia's got 'soul'

By David Banner

Just about every road test you ever read comes loaded with figures to help set the scene against the opposition, telling you about things like speed, size and fuel consumption.

And this stack of stats is helpful, especially if you're making your choice of wheels on purely sensible grounds. Which we tell ourselves we are, of course.

But some cars want to play by different rules. They ask the heart to rule the head, pushing mere figures to one side and letting emotion take the high road.

Take the latest version of Kia's Soul, one of the world's more distinctive looking cars and a shape that's been a sales hit in the States and China in its earlier guise and a steady seller here.

Now comes the second edition, with a new chassis underneath and a body that's clearly an all-over reworking of version one but a bit longer, wider and lower.

Special

Roomier inside for people, with more luggage space and a newly grown-up feel to finish and style, but still with enough of a couture feel to make it a bit special, especially in a car that costs from a modest £12,600.

Around 3,000 people a year are expected to buy into the new Soul's appeal in the UK. That's about what the old model sold too and will add more to the Kia marque's visibility on the road than it does to bottom line sales figures.

It's a shape you'll either love or loathe. To my eyes the new Soul has a thought-through smoothness of line lacking in the earlier car but manages to stay looking like nothing else on the road.

That will likely be enough to snare plenty of buyers to the brand.

The same two 1.6-litre petrol or diesel engines are offered in the new range and both suffer a bit by having to drag around a bigger car. Not enough to notice on the road but the figures have moved gently in the wrong direction.

So, the diesel (likely to be the bigger seller, from £16,400) is a little bit slower, uses a bit more fuel and has tailpipe emissions which mean you'll now pay £125 road tax in the first year, rather than none.

Happily, for a Soul buyer, such details won't count for much against the pleasures of owning a stand-out machine. And happily the car drives well enough for the small print to fade into the background.

It feels a properly grown-up machine, with a comfortable driving position, clear and logical dashboard and a smoothness about the clutch and gearchange which tell of long hours getting things right before signing the car off.

It's no ball of fire but there's more than enough performance and a ride sufficiently comfortable to render the worst of a modern British A-road a distant tremor.

A trip computer reading of 46mpg after a generous selection of town and country hill work was a promising result and usefully better than the 34mpg recorded in a shorter drive of the petrol-powered new Soul.

There are three trim levels at present with two more at the top end (Mixer and Maxxi) on the way later with mainly cosmetic changes.

The current top of the range Connect Plus lacks for little and has a fine eight-speaker sound system (Soul music?) and the clearest satellite navigation system you could wish for, along with 17in alloy wheels, automatic air conditioning, cruise control and reversing sensors.

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A simple recipe but one which works well

By David Banner

As Ford's Kuga SUV has become bigger and more expensive, there's room for something else to slot in beneath it. Say hello to the EcoSport crossover.

The Ford EcoSport uses tried and tested Fiesta mechanicals to offer UK buyers a front-wheel drive car with added ride height and chunky good looks. It sounds like a simple recipe but sometimes simple works just fine.

Ford has had a distinctly patchy record with SUVs in this country, only finally hitting form with the Kuga in 2008. Prior to that, it had foisted tired Explorers and Mavericks onto an uninterested public. Buyers recognised that this was just the same old Ford issue of taking a round peg from somewhere in its global empire and attempting to bludgeon it into a square hole. Ford has clearly learned a lot since then. Or has it?

Its latest Kuga, while a fine car, has developed from a car tailored to European sensibilities into, yes, a 'one-size fits all' world car. And the vehicle that Ford has deemed correct to slip in beneath it here in Britain is the EcoSport, a Fiesta-based model already sold in developing markets like India and Brazil. It doesn't sound like an ideal recipe, but if there's one thing we've learned, it's that the car-buying public is more tolerant of an oddball affordable car than an oddball expensive one.

The EcoSport is offered with Ford's innovative 125 PS 1.0-litre EcoBoost engine, claimant of the 2012 International Engine of the Year award. It makes 0-62mph in 12.7s on the way to 112mph. Plus there's a 112 PS 1.5-litre petrol unit which figures at 13.3s and 107mph. For those that prefer to go diesel, there's a 91 PS 1.5-litre diesel powerplant (14s and 99mph).

The EcoSport also offers a comprehensive package of driver assistance technologies, including Electronic Stability Program and Hill Launch Assist. The chunky looks and high ground clearance suggest a small 4x4 but wriggle under the EcoSport and you'll find a singular lack of rear driveshafts. It is, in effect, a Fiesta on stilts but many drivers find the raised driving position more desirable than the requirement for any actual all-wheel drive capability.

Accomplished

Once you've got over quite how bluff-fronted the EcoSport is, it's actually quite an accomplished piece of design work. The almost Aston Martin-style front grille that debuted on the Fiesta makes its way over to the EcoSport and although the side profile looks a bit pinched, Ford have been very clever with the way they've managed to make a short, tall vehicle look so interesting.

The glasshouse is elegant, the headlights and wheelarch treatment is very deft and the stance of the car is better than it has any right to be. It's built in a plant in Chennai, India, so we'll clearly have to see how quality pans out but it'll probably be built tough.

Ford claims that the EcoSport has been designed to cope with terrible third-world road conditions, so it'll be right at home in the UK. Potholes, busted water pipes and rough roads are its bread and butter and a 200mm ground clearance coupled with a 550mm water wading ability should be able to see off most wet weekends in Wetherby.

The side-hinged tailgate opens to allow access to a load space that Ford reckons is big enough to swallow a 560-litre washing machine – once the 60/40 split rear seats are folded, that is.

Prices start at around the £15,000 mark for the petrol 1.5 112PS variant, with a £1,500 premium if you want the Powershift automatic. The 125PS 1.0 EcoBoost petrol variant prices at £16,000 and there's a 91PS 1.5-litre TDCi diesel priced at around £16,500.

Expect to find equipment items like keyless entry, rear parking sensors and Ford's SYNC voice-activated in-car connectivity system as well as SYNC Emergency Assistance.

Economy and emissions aren't too far off the vehicle this car is based upon, the latest Fiesta. There's been some small controversy around the 1.0-litre EcoBoost engine not making anything like its claimed fuel economy figures in real world conditions, but that can be said of many small capacity turbocharged petrol engines. It's just a quirk of the NEDC fuel testing program.

This 125PS variant claims to manage 53.3mpg on the combined cycle and 125g/km of CO2. Alternatively, the lower-tech 112PS 1.5-litre model returns 44.8mpg and 149g/km.

Finally, there's the 1.5 TDCi diesel which manages 61.4mpg and 99g/km.

The EcoSport might not feature all-wheel drive and it won't go round corners with quite the poise of a Fiesta but don't rule out the attractions of pert good looks and an elevated driving position.

Keep an eye on the Ford EcoSport. This one's going to be interesting, if nothing else.



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Real deal for BMW 4 Series

By David Banner

The BMW 4 Series Convertible is a more aggressive and overtly sporting model than the old 3 Series drop-top ever purported to be.

Yes, you could buy convertible versions of the fire-breathing M3, but to do so was merely to pronounce that you'd missed the point of an M3 quite sorely. Things may well prove very different when dealing with a 4 Series. It's got a bit more about it.

The 4 Series Convertible is one of the few folding hard-top cars which manages to look good whether the roof is up or down.

The roof itself helps here. By choosing a three-piece roof over a two-piece item, BMW has achieved a shorter stack length when folded, which in turn avoids that distended rear end which so many folding hard-top convertibles exhibit.

Extended

There's an inherent rightness about the basic proportioning too. The overall length of 4,638mm has been extended by 26mm; the wheelbase has grown by 50mm and, together with the wider front track, this gives the car a low and wide stance on the road. The shorter overhangs, long bonnet and set-back passenger compartment give the car an elegant profile.

The roof can be lowered in just 20 seconds when the vehicle is travelling at speeds of up to 8mph. Improvements in soundproofing reduce wind noise by up to 2dB. An electro-hydraulic loading assistance system pivots and positions the folded hard top to ensure maximum utilisation of the 220 litres of storage space.

When the top is up, the boot has a volume of 370-litres, 20 litres more than in the pre-



vious 3 Series convertible. With the optional through-loading system, a flat and level storage area can be utilised when the backrest of the rear bench seat is folded down.

The entry-level version gets leather heated seats, xenon headlamps, LED rear lights, a parking radar, as well as climate control. Satellite navigation is standard on most versions, but the adaptive dampers are a box you might want to tick on the options list as well as the sport steering.

Whilst it may well be incredibly annoying for BMW's rivals, the company's ability to produce engines which generate big horsepower but modest emissions and fuel consumption has proved a huge hit with UK buyers.

The 4 Series Convertible continues this run of form. Take the 428i drop-top as an example. This is a car which gets to 62mph in just 6.4 seconds yet will return 41.5mpg and emit just 159g/km of carbon dioxide. Even the racy 435i with a power output of

over 300bhp will still manage 34.9mpg and emit just 190g/km in manual guise. Go for the automatic gearbox and the figures are even better at 37.7mpg and 176g/km respectively.

Despite these numbers, it's hard to look beyond the 420d, which is certainly brisk

.....
“Make no mistake this is no half measure.”
.....

enough, recording an 8.2 second sprint to 62, yet will still see 55.4mpg and 133g/km. Expect strong residuals which will continue to give mainstream car manufacturers something to fret over. Insurance premiums are also said to have been driven down by improved repairs and improved securi-

ty. The BMW 4 Series seems to be a carefully managed piece of product development.

This first version of the convertible merely introduces the theme, teasing at what our assumptions might be. Make no mistake, this is no half measure.

Audi and Mercedes will look at this car and wonder how on earth they can come close to beating it, yet one suspects there's a lot more to come from BMW in the next few years on the 4 Series theme.

The only possible flaw in the plan is BMW becomes a victim of its own success, that buyers will exercise a certain contrarian nature and choose a rival that's objectively not quite so talented merely in order to buy something different. In this sector, cars are as much about what they say about the owners and there are some buyers who are rather put off by the default choice.

As problems go, it's a nice one to have. BMW can congratulate themselves on a job well done.

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Model	Representative Example: BMW 320d M Sport Saloon	Official Fuel economy figures for the BMW 3 Series Saloon range: Extra Urban 43.5 – 78.5mpg (6.5 – 3.6 l/100km). Urban 22.4 – 56.5mpg (12.6 – 5.0 l/100km). Combined 32.5 – 68.9mpg (8.7 – 4.1 l/100km). CO2 emissions 202 – 109 g/km.
Monthly payment	£329.00	
Term of agreement	48 months	
Annual mileage	8,000 miles	
Customer deposit	£2,000.00	
Dealer deposit contribution	£3,979.01	
BMW UK deposit contribution	£2,750.00	
Total deposit	£8,729.01	
On the road cash price*	£32,200.00	
Amount of credit	£23,470.99	
Rate of interest (fixed)	4.90% APR	
Credit arrangement fee*	£0.00	
Credit completion fee	£0.00	
Option to purchase fee**	£10.00	
Optional final payment	£11,376.00	
Total amount payable	£35,578.01	
APR	4.9% APR	
Excess mileage charge (per mile)	6.60 pence	

Finance examples are based on BMW Select Agreements for BMW 320d M Sport Saloon. *On the road cash prices are based on manufacturers' recommended retail price and include 3 year BMW Dealer warranty, BMW Emergency Service, 12 months road fund license, vehicle first registration fee, delivery, number plates and VAT. **Option to purchase fee and optional final payment payable at the end of the agreement if you decide to purchase the vehicle. Excess mileage charges and vehicle condition charges may be payable if you return the vehicle. Retail customers only. All finance is subject to status and available to over 18's only (excluding the Channel Islands and Isle of Man). Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Advertised finance is provided by BMW Financial Services, Europa House, Bartley Way, Hook Hampshire RG27 9JF. We commonly but not exclusively introduce customers to BMW Financial Services. This introduction does not amount to independent financial advice. Offers are available on selected models ordered between 01 April 2014 and 30 June 2014 and registered by 30 September 2014, subject to availability. Prices are correct at time of going online (May 2014) and are subject to change without notice.



Model	Representative Example: BMW 520d M Sport Saloon	Official fuel economy figures for the BMW 520d M Sport Saloon: Extra Urban 43.5 – 78.5mpg (6.5 – 3.6 l/100km). Urban 22.4 – 56.5mpg (12.6 – 5.0 l/100km). Combined 32.5 – 68.9mpg (8.7 – 4.1 l/100km). CO2 emissions 129g/km.
Monthly payment	£389.00	
Term of agreement	48 months	
Annual mileage	8,000 miles	
Customer deposit	£2,000.00	
Dealer deposit contribution	£4,198.22	
BMW UK deposit contribution	£1,750.00	
Total deposit	£7,948.22	
On the road cash price*	£36,915.00	
Amount of credit	£28,966.78	
Rate of interest (fixed)	4.90% APR	
Credit arrangement fee*	£0.00	
Credit completion fee	£0.00	
Option to purchase fee**	£10.00	
Optional final payment	£14,922.00	
Total amount payable	£41,163.22	
APR	4.9% APR	
Excess mileage charge (per mile)	10.20 pence	

Finance examples are based on BMW Select Agreements for BMW 520d M Sport Saloon. *On the road cash prices are based on manufacturers' recommended retail price and include 3 year BMW Dealer warranty, BMW Emergency Service, 12 months road fund license, vehicle first registration fee, delivery, number plates and VAT. **Option to purchase fee and optional final payment payable at the end of the agreement if you decide to purchase the vehicle. Excess mileage charges and vehicle condition charges may be payable if you return the vehicle. Retail customers only. All finance is subject to status and available to over 18's only (excluding the Channel Islands and Isle of Man). Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Advertised finance is provided by BMW Financial Services, Europa House, Bartley Way, Hook Hampshire RG27 9JF. We commonly but not exclusively introduce customers to BMW Financial Services. This introduction does not amount to independent financial advice. Offers are available on selected models ordered between 01 April 2014 and 30 June 2014 and registered by 30 September 2014, subject to availability. Prices are correct at time of going online (May 2014) and are subject to change without notice.

Trusty truck's bumper mileage

By Anthony Martyn

A reliable ERF tractor unit, which has delivered tanker containers across the UK and Europe, is still going strong for a Welsh border haulage contractor, after clocking up nearly 1.7 million miles – the equivalent of 52 trips around the Equator.

George Starkey, 52, of B. G. Starkey Haulage, Overton-on-Dee, has owned the tractor unit for 14 years, taking it on when it was five years old and after it had clocked up more than 600,000 miles on triple shifts for BP.

Throughout his ownership, he has opted to use Morris Lubricants oils in the engine, which was made by Perkins in Shrewsbury, to keep it in tip-top condition and it has been trouble free. He initially used XHD 15W-50 and evolved to Ring Free MXC 15W-40, which he now swears by.

His devotion to Morris Lubricants' products does not stop there, as he also uses the company's anti-freeze and other oils from its extensive range in his car and Grey Ferguson T20 tractor. He even makes deliveries to the company's headquarters in Shrewsbury.

"She was one of the last engines to

come out of the Perkins factory in Shrewsbury, has been running on Morris Lubricants' oil from Shrewsbury and has been kept on the North Shropshire border for the last 14 years," said George.

"Morris oils have always been a firm favourite because they are excellent quality and local to Shropshire. It was always drummed into me from an early age that Morris oil was the best.

"The man who looks after my tractor unit, Dave Huxley, worked for Rolls Royce in Shrewsbury for nearly 40 years and has always recommended Morris oil. I have never had any trouble with the engine.

Better

"Most haulage companies get rid of their vehicles when they have done 500,000 miles, but I plan to go on driving mine and have no intention of selling her when she's working fine. A new vehicle wouldn't do the job any better.

"The first trip I did in her was to Poland and she has also been to France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Ireland and Scotland. I do about 80,000 miles a year, so she's got a lot of history."

His love of driving seems to run in his genes. He caught the bug by travelling with his late dad, Sam, in the cab of his animal feed company lorry, two uncles were lorry drivers and his grandfather, George, drove a tank in the First World War.

Starting work in a garage when he left school, George became a lorry driver at

the age of 21 and ventured out on his own 16 years ago. He loves life on the road, although he has noticed a marked decline in driving manners in recent years.

"People are always in a hurry and have no respect for other road users," he said.

"Some lorry drivers are no better than car drivers. I've even been cut up by lorry drivers as we are approaching deliveries."

Andrew Goddard, Morris Lubricants' managing director, said he was delighted that George's ERF tractor unit was still going strong after 1.7 million miles, underlining the excellent performance of the company's oil products.

Morris Lubricants manufactures an extensive range of lubricants formulated and developed for the modern mixed fleet. The latest emissions legislation is the main driver behind engine and transmission hardware developments and the company is committed to providing the fleet operator with the essential lubricants to ensure their correct operation.

The company has added new generation lubricants to meet the demands of exhaust after-treatment devices and transmission innovation, which requires more responsive fluids to operate under longer and more arduous operating regimes.

Pictured top: George Starkey (right) and Morris Lubricants' managing director Andrew Goddard in the cab of the ERF tractor unit.



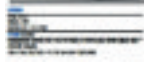
'Morris oils have always been a firm favourite because they are excellent quality and local to Shropshire'



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Property

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE
HOME BUYING AND LET

Spacious country house offers superb rural views



Parc House at Rhos-Y-Brithdir, around two and a half miles from Llanfyllin, is a spacious and well appointed detached country house in a good-sized garden.

With fine views across adjoining countryside, it is for sale through JJ Dell & Co at £339,500.

It is believed the property was renovated around forty years ago to offer spacious accommodation which is well maintained throughout with good quality fittings, said a spokesman for the selling agents.

With oil-fired central heating and double glazing, the accommodation comprises an entrance lobby, reception hall, a cloakroom, lounge with a fireplace, exposed beam and polished oak woodblock flooring, a breakfast kitchen, dining room, conservatory, laundry, three bedrooms (one en-suite), a bathroom, garden, driveway parking, wood and coal store, shed and a summerhouse.

Contact JJ Dell & Co on 01691 653437 or visit www.jjdell.co.uk to find out more.



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OMPAD 12/13-1



Ty Gwyn, Treflach
Price: Offers over £200,000

NEW **NO CHAIN**
Dating back to the early 1800's this detached county property has been extended but does require updating and modernisation. Situated on a generous size plot with grounds extending to around 1 acre of thereabouts and also occupying a most delightful rural location near to the villages of Trefonen and Treflach. Available for sale with **NO CHAIN** with character features and central heating.

Contact Oswestry



OC3902
Och, Llawnt,
Price: £325,000

NEW **NO CHAIN**
A charming detached county cottage situated in a secluded rural location 3.5 miles from Oswestry Town Centre. This property will appeal to those looking for seclusion but not isolation. In all about 0.48 acre. Mainly Oil Fired Central Heating System with Electric Off Peak Storage Heaters. EPC Rating F.

- Well presented
- Garden & Orchard
- Potential Annex
- Four Bedrooms

Contact Oswestry



OC3901
Croesau Bach, Oswestry
Price: £950,000

NEW **NO CHAIN**
Stock rearing farm offering great potential to those of farming/equestrian interests. Offering self contained annexe, ample potential office space and excellent farm buildings. The property is set in approximately 47 acres, principally pasture land divided into a number of enclosures and benefiting from stock proof fencing to all boundaries. Current EPC Rating G.

Contact Oswestry



OC3900
Craig Llwyn, Oswestry
Price: £920,000

NEW
A generously proportioned family home occupying an imposing position and affording stunning countryside views of the Shropshire/Welsh border. Positioned at the head of its own tarmac driveway, it offers superb versatile accommodation, including a self contained annex. The property is surrounded by its own grounds extending to approximately 26 acres. EPC Rating D.

Contact Oswestry



OC3904
Orchard Green, Llanymynech
Price: £194,950

NEW
A four bedroom detached family home situated on a corner plot within a popular village. Reception Hall, Living Room, Family Room, Dining Room, Kitchen, Utility Room, Cloakroom, First Floor Landing, Master Bedroom, Ensuite Shower, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Parking, Gardens, Double Garage. EPC Rating TB.C.

Contact Oswestry



OC3903
Laburnum Drive, Oswestry
Price: £189,950

NEW
This immaculate and well presented four bedroom detached family home needs to be viewed to be appreciated. The property offers spacious accommodation with private gardens and parking. The accommodation is warmed by gas fired central heating and benefits from UPVC double glazing. The current EPC Rating C.

Contact Oswestry



Arkwood, Trefonen
Price: £239,950

NEW
This charming **FOUR BEDROOM** semi detached cottage is situated in a most sought after semi rural village 2.5 miles from the market town of Oswestry. This immaculate property is warmed by oil fired central heating and benefits from double glazing.

- Lounge with Stove
- Office / Play Room
- Kitchen / Dining Room
- Master Bedroom
- Dressing Room & Ensuite
- Three Further Bedrooms

Contact Oswestry



OC3894
Oswestry Road, Whittington
Price: £229,950

NEW **NO CHAIN**
This detached 1930's bungalow retains much original character which is complemented by contemporary interiors, decor and fittings. This property is located within this most sought after and popular village and is within easy walk of amenities and bus stop. The bungalow sits centrally in its plot and benefits from a detached garage, double glazing and gas fired central heating (new heating system recently fitted) Current EPC Rating E.

Contact Oswestry



OC3793
Cefn Glaniwrch Cottage, Llanrhaeadr
Price: Region £219,950

NO CHAIN
A detached cottage is situated down a quiet country lane close to the village of Llanrhaeadr. This cottage offers characterful accommodation which dates back to around 1850

- Lounge, Kitchen, Dining Room
- Three Bedrooms
- Master with En Suite
- Gardens & Parking
- Current EPC Rating E

Contact Oswestry



OC3897
Gertrude Cottage, St Martins
Price: £159,950

NEW
A most charming cottage dating back to the early 1900's situated on an edge of village location with views of open countryside. Offering characterful accommodation and undergone a scheme of updating this family home must be viewed to be appreciated. Countryside walks, village amenities and commuter links are all nearby. Warmed by has fired Central heating. EPC Rating E.

Contact Oswestry



Hazelhead, Pant
Price: £199,950

A spacious detached bungalow which benefits from views to the Breidden Hills. Set within generous sized gardens. The property is warmed by oil fired central heating and benefits from UPVC double glazing (where stated).

- Two Reception Rooms
- Three Bedrooms
- Ample Parking
- Good Size Gardens
- Current EPC Rating E

Contact Oswestry



Green End, Oswestry
Price: £235,000

A mature extended semi detached family home located in a highly favoured residential area within easy reach of all amenities. The accommodation is warmed by gas fired central heating and benefits from double glazing (where stated). Benefiting from many original features, this property must be viewed to be appreciated. EPC Rating D.

Contact Oswestry



Laburnum House, Argoed, Kinnerley
Price: £350,000

This immaculate converted barn is situated in a most sought after rural location down a quiet lane offering character and charm in each room.

- Reception Hall, Office,
- Superb Lounge, Kitchen
- Utility Room, Cloakroom
- Master Bedroom with Ensuite
- Two Further Double Bedrooms
- Garage, Workshop, Parking
- Current EPC Rating D

Contact Oswestry



Wern, Nr Selattyn
Price: £325,000

NEW
A lovely executive detached family home situated in semi rural location with open countryside views to the front and rear elevations. This spacious family home is warmed by oil fired central heating and benefits from UPVC double glazing. Current EPC Rating C

- Immaculate Accommodation
- Four Double Beds
- Double Garage
- Three Reception Rooms

Contact Oswestry



Tynycelyn, Cefn Canol
Price: £439,950

This four bedroom detached family home is situated in a pleasant rural location only a 10 minute drive from Oswestry Town. Immaculate Accommodation which must be viewed.

- 4 Bedroom (Master & En-Suite)
- Stands In 1.6 Acres
- Superb Open Countryside Views
- Oil Central Heating
- Ample Parking
- Current EPC Rating E

Contact Oswestry



OC3848
Bachia Cottage, Llanfyllin
Price: £315,000

This 1920's detached double fronted family home offers spacious accommodation and four acres of land or thereabouts.

- 5 Bedroom Property
- 2 Reception Rooms
- Three Garden Stores
- Approx 4 Acres Of Land
- In Need Of Some Updating
- Current EPC Rating G

Contact Oswestry



Castell Cottage, Llanrhaeadr
Price: Offers over £210,000

A charming, distinctive and unique detached cottage offering immaculately presented accommodation benefiting from panoramic views of the Tanat Valley and surrounding countryside.

- Two/Three Bedrooms
- Master & En-Suite
- Workshop, Car Port, Parking
- Unspoilt Picturesque Location
- Current EPC Rating F

Contact Oswestry



Bryn Castell Gardens, Gobowen
Price: £249,995

NO CHAIN
Opening out onto open countryside, this detached four bed property is situated in a quiet cul de sac location. Offering Two Reception Rooms, Conservatory, Master Suite, Good Size Rear Garden backing out on to the River Perry and open countryside. Warmed by gas fired central heating and benefits from UPVC double glazing. Current EPC Rating C.

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NEW
Oswestry Hayes Barn Racecourse Road
6 BED DET RECENTLY CONVERTED
3 RECEPTION ROOMS
5 EN SUITES
EPC RATING E
GUIDE PRICE £949,950



NEW
Welshpool 4/5 BED DET HOUSE
APPROX 25 ACRES
AGRICULTURAL BUILDING
EPC RATING C
OIRO £479,950



Ellesmere Oak Fields Farm Dudleston Heath
3 BED DET HOUSE
APPROXIMATELY 3 ACRES
DOUBLE GLAZING
EPC RATING E
OIRO £389,950



Oswestry Min-y-dwr Llanbyblodwel
4 BED DET HOUSE
NO CHAIN
OPEN PLAN LIVING AREA
EPC RATING C
OIRO £379,950



NEW
Treflach 4 BED DET HOUSE
ANNEX
3 RECEPTION ROOMS
EPC RATING D
£379,950



NEW
Rhydydroesau 5 BED DETACHED HOUSE
APPROX 3.4 ACRES LAND
CONSERVATORY
EPC RATING E
OIRO £374,950



Oswestry Spring Cottage Candy
3 BED DET COTTAGE
2.5 ACERS (Approx)
2 RECEPTION ROOMS
EPC RATING E
OIRO £369,950



NEW PRICE
Oswestry Fishers Cottage Llanbyblodwel
3 BED DET HOUSE
RIVERSIDE LOCATION
APPROX 2.5 ACRES LAND
EPC RATING D
OIRO £369,950



NEW
Oswestry 6 Brynhafod Drive
3 BED DET BUNGALOW
DOUBLE GARAGE
2 RECEPTION ROOMS
EPC RATING E
£339,950



NEW
Trefonen 3 BED DET HOUSE
2 RECEPTION ROOMS
OPEN VIEWS
EPC RATING F
OIRO £324,950



Llanymynech Arddol Llandysilio
3 BED SEMI DET HOUSE
12 BAY STABLE BLOCK
APPROXIMATELY 3 ACRES
EPC RATING D
OIRO £294,950



NEW
Oswestry Erwlas Middleton Road
5 BED DET HOUSE
3 RECEPTION ROOMS
WORKSHOP
EPC RATING C
OIRO £294,950



NEW PRICE
Pant Oswestry 4 BED DET HOUSE
KITCHEN/ DINER
DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM
EPC RATING C
OIRO £249,950



NEW
Llynclys 3 BED DET HOUSE
2 RECEPTION ROOMS
NO CHAIN
EPC RATING E
OIRO £247,950



Weston Rhyn Oswestry Weston View Wern
4 BED DETACHED HOUSE
2 RECEPTION ROOMS
2 BATHROOMS
EPC RATING E
OIRO £229,950



NEW
SELATTYN CHAPEL HOUSE
3 BED CONVERTED CHAPEL
NO CHAIN
3 RECEPTION ROOMS
EPC RATING E
OIRO £229,950



NEW PRICE
Houghton Chapel Cottage
3/4 SEMI-DET HOUSE
NO CHAIN
2 RECEPTION ROOMS
EPC RATING E
OIRO £224,950



NEW
Oswestry 3 Victoria Parade Roft Street
4 BED TERRACED HOUSE
OFF ROAD PARKING
2 RECEPTION ROOMS
EPC RATING TBC
OIRO £222,500



NEW
West Felton Hillview Weirbrook
3 BED DET HOUSE
2 RECEPTION ROOMS
GARAGE
EPC RATING F
£219,950



NEW
Pant 3 BED DET BUNGALOW
LIVING ROOM / DINER
OPEN VIEWS
EPC RATING D
OIRO £214,950



Oswestry 4 Greystones Way
3/4 BED DET HOUSE
NO CHAIN
2 RECEPTION ROOMS
EPC RATING C
OIRO £194,950



NEW PRICE
Oswestry The Coach House Penygareg Lane
2 BED DET HOUSE
2 RECEPTION ROOMS
OIL CENTRAL HEATING
EPC RATING E
OIRO £184,950



NEW
Oswestry 8 Guinevere Close
3 BED DET HOUSE
2 RECEPTION ROOMS
GARAGE
EPC RATING D
OIRO £172,950



NEW
Gobowen 4 BED TOWNHOUSE
KITCHEN/ DINER
LIVING ROOM BALCONY
EPC RATING C
OIRO £169,950



NEW
Oswestry 125 Cabin Lane
3/4 BED SEMI DET HOUSE
CONSERVATORY
OFF ROAD PARKING
EPC RATING D
OIRO £166,950



NEW PRICE
Oswestry 62 Whitefriars
3 BED SEMI DET HOUSE
2 RECEPTION ROOMS
GAS CENTRAL HEATING
EPC RATING D
OIRO £154,950



Oswestry 47 Walford Road
3 BED DET BUNGALOW
NO CHAIN
MODERN KITCHEN
EPC RATING D
OIRO £149,950



NEW PRICE
Oswestry 173 Cabin Lane
3 BED SEMI DET HOUSE
NO CHAIN
CONSERVATORY
EPC RATING C
OIRO £147,500



NEW PRICE
Oswestry 15 Cae Melin Avenue
3 BED TERRACED HOUSE
LOUNGE/DINER
CONSERVATORY
TWO DOUBLE BEDROOMS
OIRO £144,950



NEW
Welshpool 20 Brynglas
2 BED SEMI DET BUNGALOW
GAS CENTRAL HEATING
DOUBLE GLAZING
EPC RATING D
OIRO £134,950



NEW
Oswestry 46 Chestnut Avenue
3 BED SEMI DET HOUSE
2 RECEPTION ROOMS
OFF ROAD PARKING
EPC RATING D
£124,950



NEW
Oswestry 8 Epsom Close
2 BED SEMI DET HOUSE
OFF ROAD PARKING
CONSERVATORY
EPC RATING C
OIRO £116,950



Oswestry 42 Upper Brook Street
1 BED TERRACE HOUSE
NO CHAIN
PVC DOUBLE GLAZING
EPC RATING E
OIRO £89,950



NEW PRICE
Oswestry 3 BED DET BUNGALOW
NO CHAIN
IN NEED OF MODERNISATION
EPC RATING F
OFFERS OVER £79,950

LETTINGS

9 EATON FIELDS, OSWESTRY. 1 BED TERRACED HOUSE£375 PCM
17 YORK STREET, OSWESTRY. 2 BED TERRACED HOUSE£395 PCM
23 YORK STREET, OSWESTRY. 2 BED TERRACED HOUSE£395 PCM
5 CANAL SIDE, LLANMYNECH. 2 BED APARTMENT£395 PCM
15 MEWS COTTAGES, OSWESTRY. 2 BED TERRACED HOUSE ..£400 PCM
19 SCHOOL ROAD, WEST FELTON. 2 BED TERRACED HOUSE £420 PCM
2 OFFAS DYKE, FOUR CROSSES. 3 BED SEMI DET HOUSE..... £575 PCM



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Maesbrook £550,000

- An 18th Century Georgian farmhouse, excellent range of farm buildings & 2.7 acres of land
- The property stands in open countryside just outside the popular village of Maesbrook
- Believed to date back to 1777, Caegwelson is a fine example of a Georgian farmhouse
- Large 'L' shaped range of outbuildings encloses the properties courtyard and through currently offering gool livery facilities could accommodate a host of future uses as required.
- excellent mature gardens with a further 2.7 acres of pasture land.



Cefn Coch Llanrhaeadr £395,000

- Truly idyllic country cottage
- In an elevated position overlooking open countryside
- Retaining a host of Original Features
- Sun Room, Dining Hall, Farmhouse Style Kitchen
- Utility, Ground Floor Shower Room, Lounge
- 3 Bedrooms (master en-suite WC) Family Bathroom
- Large Gardens, Ample Parking, D/G/Oil C/H. EPC Rating E



Ascot Road Oswestry £154,995

- A well presented 3 Bedroom Detached Family Home
- The property still benefits from an NHBC Building Guarantee
- Ent Hall, Cloaks, Lounge, Dining Room, Conservatory, Kitchen
- 3 Bedrooms (master en-suite) and Family Bathroom
- Double tarmac driveway providing off-road parking
- Enclosed garden, patio & large timber garden shed
- Gas C/H & uPVC double glazing, EPC Rating D



Upper Chirk Bank £250,000

- A rare residential development opportunity located in the picturesque village of Chirk Bank extending to 1.06 acres (0.43 ha) having Outline Planning Permission for 7 units.
- The site is set in an elevated position with excellent views towards the Welsh border and within walking distance of the Shropshire Union Canal and the Chirk Aqueduct which forms part of a World Heritage site.
- The village is also ideally located for access onto the A5/A483 trunk roads providing links to the larger towns of Chirk, Llangollen, Oswestry, Wrexham, Shrewsbury and the City of Chester.



Beresford Gardens Oswestry £179,995

- An immaculately presented 3 Bedroom Townhouse
- Originally forming part of the old Girls High School
- Entrance Hall, Cloaks, Open Living/Dining Room
- Fully fitted Kitchen, first floor there is access to the balcony
- Three excellent Bedrooms and Family Bathroom
- 2 parking spaces, ornamental lawn & enclosed rear garden
- Gas C/H and part timber double glazing, EPC Rating D



Old St Martins Rd Gobowen £94,500

- Spacious and comfortable End-of-Terrace House
- Sitting Room, Kitchen
- Family Bathroom, Two Excellent Bedrooms
- Enclosed lawned garden to the rear
- Double glazing, gas fired central heating
- EPC Rating E



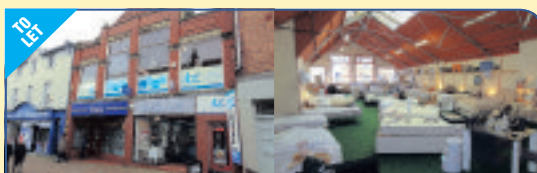
York Street Oswestry £116,995

- Deceptively spacious & well presented Mid-Terrace Property
- Lounge leading into Dining Room, Kitchen/Breakfast Room
- Rear Hallway, Ground Floor WC, 2 Bedrooms, Bathroom
- Good size rear garden, Storage Shed/Utility,
- uPVC double glazing & Gas C/H. EPC Rating D



Oak Drive Oswestry £240,000

- Superb 4 Bed Detached House
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Room
- Kitchen/Breakfast Room, Utility, Cloakroom
- 4 Beds, En-Suite, Family Bathroom
- Ample Off-Road Parking, Enclosed Rear Garden
- Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, EPC Rating C



Bailey Street Oswestry £8,000

- An extensive ground and first floor showroom suite situated in a central trading position within the town centre of Oswestry.
- Extends to around 3,500 sq ft and briefly comprises a large first floor show room, adjoining ground floor show room, associated offices, store room, kitchen and WC's.
- The premises are located within the main shopping area of the town close to a host of established shops and the indoor market.
- The area is well served with public car parking and easy access for deliveries.



Rhossyllan House St Martins £180,000

- Substantial 4 Bedroom Detached Family Home with garage& off-road parking
- The property has been extensively modernised by the current owners
- Lounge, Inner Hallway/Study, Dining Room, Kitchen
- Utility, Cloakroom, 4 Bedrooms and Bathroom
- 4 Beds
- Enclosed rear garden with a large garage & allocated parking area
- Gas fired central heating and uPVC double glazing, EPC Rating E



Potential Building Plot Gobowen £55,000

- A potential building plot situated within the village of Gobowen.
- A pre-application to Shropshire Council has been made, who have indicated that the proposed development would be acceptable
- The site currently extends to approximately 205 square metres, measuring 18 metres x 11 metres average across the plot.



The Meads Weston Rhyn £117,500

- Well presented 3 Bedroom Mid-Terrace Property
- Well maintained by the current owners
- Fully fitted Kitchen/Breakfast Rm with Appliances
- Spacious Lounge, 3 Bedrooms & Shower Room
- Good size garden, driveway with off-road parking
- uPVC double glazing & Gas C/H. EPC Rating D



Donnett Mews Whittington £139,995

- A well appointed two bedroom Barn Conversion
- Situated close to the centre of the village of Whittington
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen/Dining Room
- Two Bedrooms and Bathroom
- The garden is mainly laid to patio and grave
- Off-road parking, D/G and Gas C/H. EPC Rating D



Springfield Gardens West Felton £215,000

- Detached Bungalow in Popular Village Location
- Ent Hall, Lounge, Dining Rm
- Recently Fitted Kitchen, Conservatory
- Recently Fitted Bathroom, 2 Beds
- Large Drive, Single Garage, WC
- UPVC D/G, Fascias and Soffits
- Oil C/H. EPC Rating D



Llansantffraid Nr Oswestry £299,950

- Impressive Detached House set within approx 2 acres
- Sitting Rm, Dining Rm/Kitchen/Breakfast Rm
- T.V. Rm/Bedrm 5, Living Rm/Study, Utility,
- 4 Beds
- Family Bathroom, En-Suite Shower Rm
- Dble garage with pony stable
- Part D/G & part Oil C/H, EPC Rating G



Barber Close Oswestry £169,995

- Deceptively spacious 4/5 Bed, 3 Storey Townhouse
- Ent Hall, Cloaks, well fitted Kitchen/Dining Room
- Utility, Study/Bed 5, Lounge, 2 Beds & Bathrm
- 2 further Bedrooms (master en-suite)
- Patio area to rear & a lawned garden to side
- Single garage & driveway, Gas C/H & D/G. EPC Rating B

Merc crossover is Class act

By David Banner

It's not like Mercedes-Benz to miss out on an opportunity. There are few companies more committed to filling niches and sub-niches than the Stuttgarters, but if you had to nominate two that were even more opportunistic, you'd probably finger Audi and BMW.

Both companies have lined their pockets in this country with their smaller SUVs, Audi with the Q3 and Q5 and BMW with its X1 and X3 models. Meanwhile, Mercedes has been left uncharacteristically bereft, with nothing comparable in its product range. Until now that is.

The GLA Class is Mercedes' answer and it hasn't taken AMG long to get its hands

on it and produce the vehicle we have here; the GLA 45 AMG. We've had A and CLA-class models with that suffix before and it spells all-wheel drive traction and a surfeit of power that's almost obscene.

Can it work in a higher-riding 'crossover' body? Audi's RS Q3 has demonstrated that a market exists. Can Mercedes trump Audi at its own game?

There's only one engine on offer but it is quite a powerplant. A 2.0-litre four-cylinder unit might not immediately promise great fireworks, but this one comprehensively trumps the 310PS 2.5-litre lump in the Audi RS Q3, developing a hefty 360PS from a relatively lightweight hand-built twin-scroll turbo engine.

Mercedes claims it to be the most powerful series-production four-cylinder turbo engine in the world and although you might well remember the odd Mitsubishi Evo with a few more ponies under the bon-



Mercedes claims it to be the most powerful series-production four-cylinder turbo engine in the world

net, for the time being at least it's impossible to argue with Mercedes' claim. This engine develops 450Nm of torque from just 2,250rpm, again incrementally better than the Audi's 418Nm.

Think zero to 62mph in just 4.8 seconds on the way to an electronically limited 155mph top speed. That's one fast crossover.

The styling of the GLA 45 AMG offers a neat third way if you find the A45 AMG too gawky and the CLA 45 AMG too weird. Of the three, it's probably got the most cohesive front to rear design and it's not

too overdone. The cabin gets some sporty touches, such as bolstered seats in Artico/Dinamica microfibre with red contrasting stitching and red seat belts.

The GLA rides on a 2699mm wheelbase, so don't expect limousine-standard legroom in the rear seats. Luggage space is 421-litres with the seats in place and 836-litres with them folded down completely.

Expect to pay around £45,000 for the GLA 45 AMG, once you've allowed for some extras.



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Monthly Payments	£355.00	Amount of Credit	£27,432.15
On the Road Price	£36,890.00	Total Amount Payable	£40,787.85
Customer Deposit	£5,582.86	Credit Acceptance Fee	£180.00
Retailer Deposit Contribution	£3,874.99	Purchase Activation	£95.00
Total Deposit	£9,457.85	Fixed Interest Rate	5.22%
Number of Payments	36	APR Representative	5.8%
Optional Final Payment	£18,275.00		

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TJ Vickers Suzuki

VAT-free deals for spring

Suzuki has chosen to put a spring in car buyers' steps with the Alto, Splash, Swift and SX4 available under the brand's highly successful VAT-free campaign, which will run until the end of June.

The popular Alto SZ model will continue to be available from £5,999 which represents a £1,200 customer saving on list price.

Splash 1.0-litre SZ2 is available from £7,999, Swift 1.2 SZ2 three-door at £8,999 and the SX4 1.6 SZ3 at £10,495.

Suzuki is also continuing its flexible personal contract purchase offers until the end of June.

Alto SZ is available for a deposit of £869 followed by one payment of £125

then 41 monthly payments of £99 with the option to pay a final balloon payment of £2,235 at the end of the agreement to keep the car.

Moving up the small car range to the Splash SZ2 1.0-litre, the latest PCP offer has a low deposit of £929 followed by 48 monthly payments of £125 and an optional final payment of £2,883.

Continues

The good news also continues for Swift buyers, as an example, the SZ2 three-door at £8,999 remains available for a deposit of only £156 followed by 42 monthly payments of £156 and an optional final payment of £3,683.

The PCP offers include the latest model Swift 1.3 DDiS which has CO2 emissions of just 101g/km and offers 72.4mpg on the combined cycle.

The SX4 S-Cross range is available

from £14,999 and there is a range of finance options to help buyers find a payment option which suits them, including a new enhancement on Driveplan PCP, making all DDiS models available for the same deposit and monthly payment as an equivalent petrol version.

Taking the 1.6 petrol SZ3 model as an example, with its high standard specification, Suzuki is offering a low rate PCP of 4.9 per cent APR with £2,999 deposit, 42 monthly payments of £185 and optional balloon payment of £5,757.

Move up the range to the SZ4 with dual-zone automatic air conditioning, Bluetooth connectivity, front fog lamps and rear privacy glass as standard, and payments are £10 per month extra over the same term.



Budgen Peugeot



Hot hatch for the new era

I despair at getting older, but one of the advantages of being of a more mature age is we are able to remember things which happened quite a few years ago, and one such memory will remain with me until my dotage – the joy of driving a Peugeot 205 GTI 1.9-litre around the Donington Park motoring racing circuit in the early 80s, writes Bob Hickman.

It was without doubt the ubiquitous hot hatch, the vehicle which set the benchmark all others had to follow.

Sadly, with insurance costs and exorbitant premiums, it died a death.

Thank goodness Peugeot has always hankered after bringing back the hot hatch, and with the 208 GTI it has reincarnated the brilliant 205.

Whether it is as good remains to be seen, but the new 208 GTI looks the business. It just shouts at you it is exactly what it says on the tin.

It is powered by a turbo-charged 1.6-litre engine which gives an impressive 200bhp. This projects the vehicle from 0-60 in less than seven seconds, and where possible, will give a top speed of 143mph.

All this from a relatively small, diminutive three-door hatchback which will take the children to school, do the shopping, and reward you so dramatically when you venture off onto those twisty 'B' roads.

The external look of the 208 GTI is an absolute delight with its curvaceous form.

The 17in alloy wheels, red brake callipers and the chrome exhaust system all hint at what is available beneath the skin of this vehicle.

Inside, the vehicle says I am a sporty derivative. The red stitching on the sport seats hug you like a comfort blanket. It is a vehicle designed to not just look good but handle superbly, and give you a buzz of excitement from the performance.

The new 208 GTI is further distinguishable from its 208 sibling with its lower ride height, wider track, front and rear sporty sills and wing extensions and, of course, an abundance of extra chromium plate. The rear spoiler and the brake callipers really do emphasise the sporty appearance.

Quickly

The 1.6-litre engine has been allied to a six-speed manual gearbox, this enables power to be delivered quickly and effortlessly whichever gear you choose. There is a degree of feedback through the steering, which is nice, but it is not overly sensitive.

The engineers have designed the suspension without giving a rough, harsh ride which rattle the fillings in your teeth, like so many manufacturers try to do, to enable a decent bit of handling.

That said, this is a sporty vehicle and you expect a sporty suspension.

Peugeot has managed to maintain a degree of comfort whilst also allowing the vehicle to be adequate in its performance at holding its lines through variable road surfaces.

The 208 GTI is only available as a three-door, and we all appreciate the difficulties of just two doors when getting in and out of the back, but I firmly

believe the 208 GTI is for the driver and partner and possibly two small children. It is not about being a real family car.

There is reasonable headroom, but those like me at 6ft, would not be happy in the rear and not particularly comfortable either.

The standard kit is quite reasonable. It includes automatic dual-zone air conditioning; the entertainment is controlled with a multi-functional coloured touch screen which incorporates a DAB radio, USB and Bluetooth connectivity.

There are also automatic headlamps and windscreen wipers. The driver has very little to do in that respect, except to find out how to switch them off – automatic headlights are a bane of my life.

There are a number of airbags as you would expect in a 2014 car, and also ABS and anti-lock brakes, and a stability programme has been incorporated.

You can disengage it if you wish, with an experience of being a driver in a driver's car, and therefore not being driven by electronic wizardry.

Peugeot claims a CO2 emission of 139g/km, which will not be overly expensive for the excise duty. It also suggests on the combined cycle 47.9mpg may be achievable, I managed 40.4mpg in my 300 miles test.

There can be little doubt the new 208GTI will win friends and be a rewarding vehicle to own. With a three-year and 60,000 miles warranty and being priced at £18,895 on the road, I am sure Peugeot has a winner on its hands.

Time will tell if it replicates the brilliant, ubiquitous 205GTI.



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1st Monthly Payment	£294.38	Excess Mileage Charge Per Mile (+VAT)	8p
35 Monthly Payments	£149.38	Fixed Interest Rate	2.98%
Optional Final Payment	£4,148	Representative APR	6.8%

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Amount of Credit	£7,615	Annual Mileage	6,667
1st Monthly Payment	£270.44	Excess Mileage Charge Per Mile (+VAT)	5p
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Optional Final Payment	£4,148	Representative APR	6.8%



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Customer Deposit	£1,900	Duration of Agreement	37 Months
Amount of Credit	£10,053.55	Annual Mileage	6,667
1st Monthly Payment	£343.81	Excess Mileage Charge Per Mile (+VAT)	9p
35 Monthly Payments	£198.81	Fixed Interest Rate	2.98%
Optional Final Payment	£5,339	APR	6.6%

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On the Road Price	£12,073.55	Total Amount Payable	£13,602.64
Customer Deposit	£1,900	Duration of Agreement	37 Months
Amount of Credit	£10,173.55	Annual Mileage	6,667
1st Monthly Payment	£317.74	Excess Mileage Charge Per Mile (+VAT)	6p
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Optional Final Payment	£5,339	APR	6.6%

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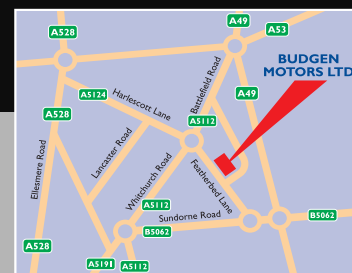
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Official fuel consumption figures in mpg/(l/100km) for the Peugeot range are: Urban 28.2 (10.0) - 55.4 (5.1), Extra-urban 48.7 (5.8) - 74.3 (3.8), Combined 38.7 (7.3) - 65.7 (4.3). Official emission figures range from 169-99g/km.

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Skoda Yeti is fit for the hills

By David Banner

Over the past few years I have been proclaiming to anyone who would listen, or for that matter anybody who asked, my advice on car ownership, the merits of Skoda.

The marque has been transformed and is now at the top end of affordable vehicles which everyone should consider.

It is my view that with the strange sounding Yeti, Skoda has produced probably its best car to date.

The Yeti is well packaged, brilliantly sized with impressive on and off-road behaviour characteristics.

Skoda has tapped into the marketplace which all manufacturers now have to be involved in. It is a vehicle which, if you feel you

need a 4 x 4 but you want to be seen to be a bit green, you should take a look at.

Whilst not wanting to be negative, I think the designers may have attended the old Volvo design school, because the vehicle is rather angular.

The advantage of this is that it places a wheel at each corner, and this translates to excellent off-road ability, in so far as you do not have any annoying overhangs front or rear which could be a problem if you were seriously off-roading.

Add in to the equation the huge windows all round and the high seating position, and it means even rear passengers have excellent all-round visibility – this is another box to be ticked by the Yeti.

I like to sit in the back of the vehicle I am testing. I am just over 6ft tall and if I can get comfortable with sufficient head, and importantly, knee room, then most people can.

The Yeti has the advantage of the rear seats being adjustable. The outer two seats



can slide backwards, and you can also alter the amount of recline to the backrest, so you can really get quite comfortable.

The boot is not overly generous and it was very awkward to load large items due to the high sill. The vehicle, of course, has the advantage of seats which fold out of the way, so that you can carry bigger loads should you so wish.

The Yeti is available with five engine derivatives, two petrols, a 1.2-litre and a 1.8-litre, producing 105bhp and 160bhp respectively. Then there are two diesel options with power outputs of 110bhp and to 170bhp. A smaller 1.2-litre engine is only available in the two-wheel drive

version. The driving dynamics of the Yeti are of a friendly companion which does all you ask from it. It's a sure-footed vehicle on all types of terrain.

In a deluge of recent thunderstorms, I felt secure and cocooned in a degree of safety with the permanent four-wheel drive system fitted.

I ventured to a very wet car boot sale and whilst others were sliding around and trying to exit the muddy terrain, the Yeti sat down, got on with the job and got me out of the situation without any undue stress.

The amount of standard equipment is quite impressive, even the entry level has air condi-

tioning with remote central locking and electric front windows. If alloy wheels have to be part of your package, then you need to look at an S derivative and this also introduces front fog lamps and the rear windows are electrically operated.

Dual zone climate control, parking sensors, and a better CD is introduced in the SE, and the top specification, Elegance, has leather upholstery.

For me an S level would tick all the boxes, especially if it was the two-litre turbo diesel engine.

My test Yeti Elegance Outdoor 2.0 TDi, 4 x 4, was priced at £24,950. Yeti prices start from £16,405.

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Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the ŠKODA range: Urban 21.7 (13.0) to 74.3 (3.8); Extra Urban 40.4 (7.0) to 94.2 (3.0); Combined 30.4 (9.3) to 83.3 (3.2). CO₂ emissions for the new ŠKODA range 217 to 85 g/km. Standard EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.



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Greenhous named number one

Greenhous has been named number one in the area for new Vauxhall vehicle sales for the second year in a row.

The Shropshire and Staffordshire-based dealership has added to an already successful year with yet another award, following on from customer satisfaction success.

The Greenhous Vauxhall site at Old Potts way in Shrewsbury has come out on top by achieving the highest market share in the area of representation above the likes of Ford and Volkswagen.

"To receive another award for our success in 2013 is a fantastic achievement," said Richard Potts, franchise director at Greenhous. "After winning

Vauxhall's 'Customer Excellence Award' at the beginning of 2014, being recognised for our new vehicle sales is the icing on the cake."

Richard believes the high sales figures are down to a number of contributing factors.

He said: "The success is a reflection of all the hard work and dedication from everyone involved over the past year. We have also had a number of great offers which have no doubt appealed to our customers."

"The release of two brand new models into two new sectors definitely put Vauxhall back on the map. The ADAM became the first Vauxhall to enter the fashionable 'supermini' sector, boasting over a million design combinations. That along with the full-sized convertible Cascada launched last April has given the brand a real boost.

"We also held a couple of major events throughout the year including the Vauxhall 'Big Event' and the 'VIP Weekend' which allowed a select few loyal customers to come in for individual appointments and view exclusive offers. These were both a great way to get customers into the showroom and we already have numerous events planned for the rest of this year."

Richard concludes: "This latest accolade confirms that Greenhous are a real force to be reckoned with in the motoring industry. Not only are we achieving success in sales but also in aftersales and customer service. We have a very exciting year ahead with plenty more events and offers in the pipeline."

"We're expecting big things for the future and hope to match this success in the years to come."

Easter egg raffle raises funds for rescued pets

More than £150 has been raised for Hilbrae Kennels - a pets hotel based in Telford - with the raffle of a giant chocolate Easter egg by motor group Greenhous.

The Shropshire and West Midlands-based group held the raffle after donation of an egg that was over a foot tall from local confectionery manufacturers - Magna Specialist Confectioners.

Dave Sullivan, franchise director at Greenhous said: "We get involved in numerous charity events throughout the year on both a small and large scale. After receiving the generous donation we felt it would be a great opportunity to raise some money with a raffle."

"Supporting the local community has always been a top priority for Greenhous which is why we decided to donate the money to Hilbrae Kennels. They are a local organisation that do a fantastic job and need any support they can get to continue with the great work they carry out."

Hilbrae Kennels - Pets Hotel is a family-run concern where animals come first. Home to boarding kennels which cater for dogs, cats, small pets and cage birds. They also have rescue kennels where the stray and abandoned dogs from Telford and Newport stay while waiting for new homes or to be reclaimed by their owners.

Marty Burrell from Hilbrae Kennels said: "We are hugely grateful to

Greenhous for the donation and for having us in mind when deciding on a worthy cause to support."

"Contributions like these are always welcome and make a real difference to re-homing animals in need."

"Donations of food, bedding, toys or of course cash are always appreciated."

"We always make sure any money

donated goes directly to the welfare of the dogs and is not lost in administration or other hidden costs."

Marty concluded: "Greenhous have a strong presence in the area and it is great to see them giving something back to the local community regularly. We want to thank Greenhous for their generosity and hope that we can work together with them again in the future."



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When going gets tough

By Sharon Walters

Hands up – we all make errors when driving. No-one, and I mean no-one, is perfect.

Sometimes we are taken unawares and have to act pretty quick to get out of trouble. And, thank heavens, the majority of those errors are minor causing no more than a sharp foot on the brake or some evasive action.

Quite often those errors can actually demonstrate how good the cars are which we are driving.

Which is what happened to me when driving the Vauxhall Insignia Country Tourer for the first time. A left turn over an adverse camber which proved tighter than I anticipated, meant for a moment I was half expecting to lose control. But no, road-holding was excellent, main-

ly due to the four-wheel drive system. This system, which underpins the Country Tourer version of the Insignia range, is an electronically-controlled set-up which automatically directs torque to the rear axle when it detects slippage, ensuring decent traction when the going gets a bit slippery.

In normal road conditions, the car defaults back to front-wheel drive mode, which helps cut fuel consumption and emissions. Which means you don't have to do anything except steer! The car easily coped with my actions and I felt totally in control – as I did when driving it through mud-strewn and flooded roads in January.

The car was the last addition to the revised Insignia range which hit our roads late last year. Like the rest of the revised Insignia range, the Country Tourer has the latest round of updates which have made this mid-sized Vauxhall one of the best-riding cars in its class.

Better

Damper and anti-roll bar settings have been revised for better ride and control, while the electronic power steering system has been reprogrammed for better feel. Noise, vibration and harshness levels have also been reduced.

The 20mm of additional ride height also helps when tackling off-road tracks, although it's worth remembering the approach and departure angles are still a little shallow, so it's best not to get stuck into any terrain which looks a bit too rough.

The Country Tourer gets two of the best engines in the Insignia line-up. Both are punchy 2.0-litre CDTi units, a 163PS variant with start/stop and a muscley 195PS BiTurbo unit. The 163PS engine is available with either a six-speed manual or six-speed automatic transmission, and the BiTurbo comes with the automatic gearbox only.



Despite its 0-62mph time of 9.9 seconds and 130mph top speed, the Country Tourer BiTurbo can still achieve 42.8mpg on the combined cycle, with CO2 emissions of just 174g/km.

It certainly looks a capable beast too, with its signature Griffin grille, which is now wider and deeper, making the front styling distinctively Vauxhall. There's coloured protective cladding on the side sills and lower body sections, which gives the wheel-arches a more pronounced, flared look.

A final visual flourish is provided by distinctive front and rear light units. The headlamps, with embedded chrome accents, incorporate wing-style LED daytime running lights. This theme is repeated at the rear, with LED brake and taillights. It looks good from front, side and rear – and probably from above too.

Build quality is good and inside there's a high

level of finish, with a dashboard computer display usefully mimicking the central console.

However the selection process for the many displays available is a little confusing and I was stuck in the wrong display for a time. I had to park up and practice going between each before cracking the 'code'.

I also have to mention the excellent sound system, a must for a music fan like me.

Another plus for me was the nifty electric boot lift which made putting shopping bags in so easy. There was no dumping the bags on to soggy ground and fiddling with a catch.

Joining other Vauxhall 4x4s including the Mokka, Antara and a new Movano all-wheel drive van, the Country Tourer is the Luton-based manufacturer's latest entry into the growing D-segment crossover sector.

With ever-worsening British winters, there

has been increased demand from customers wanting the robustness of an SUV combined with the convenience of a tourer body shape.

"The Insignia Country Tourer is perfect for a winter holiday, on snowy roads, or simply when the going gets tough," said Stuart Harris, Vauxhall's head of carline brand. "Even on urban roads its robust looks give it strong stand-out appeal." It is also, as I found, a very comfortable car for normal day-to-day use, with the added security of all-wheel drive for when the going gets a little tough.

You can choose between two trim levels, Country Tourer, priced from £25,349 to £29,709 on the road, and Country Tourer Nav, priced from £26,499 to £30,859 on the road.

Crucially, entry-level Insignia Country Tourer Nav pricing undercuts that of key D-segment crossover rivals.

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Hyundai up there with best

Graham Breeze

The most recent Hyundai i10 is right up there with the best if you're in the market for a car for about town.

The i10 has always had what it took to be competitive in the city car sector and the most recent edition has rocketed Hyundai to a new lofty place.

Hyundai claim this sharply styled model aims to inject a dose of desirability, without losing its predecessor's sensible appeal.

Gone are the trim names of Classic, Active and Style in favour of S, SE and Premium and its longer, wider and lower than before. This is a big car in small car guise.

The i10 is aggressively priced in a cut-throat bottom end of the market, coming in cheaper than its nearest rivals and still not cutting corners on quality.



In fact, its hard to fault, considering you get combined fuel figures of 57.6mpg, 0-62mph in a perky 12.3 seconds and a top speed of 109mph.

Hyundai hasn't been scoring too well in reliability surveys, but the i10 gets a five-year warranty with roadside assistance and free annual vehicle checks – it doesn't come much better.

Inside, the car is as spacious as any other in the sector and although the plastics are a little on the firm side there's a real feel of quality about the cabin.

There's plenty of room up front, and although the rear seat passengers might complain about leg room, it's as good as anything else on the market.

The boot is surprisingly big, though not good enough to pass the golf club test, and Hyundai has made good use of all the stowage space areas.

Entry-level S trim gives you electric front



‘The i10 is aggressively priced in a cut-throat bottom end of the market, coming in cheaper than its nearest rivals’

windows, central locking, a CD player and a USB socket. S Air adds air-conditioning to this list, but the SE on test included air-con, remote central locking, electric rear windows, driver's seat-height adjustment and electrically adjustable heated door mirrors.

If you want to pay a bit more the top spec, Premium, gets alloy wheels, leather steering wheel, Bluetooth connectivity and LED daytime running lights.

The i10s is a safe car too, with six air-bags, tyre-pressure-monitoring system

and stability control as standard. You get central locking on all models and the SE gets remote control.

And to keep you extra safe there's ABS, Brake Assist System, and ESP – things not normally associated with a city car of this type.

I'm not sure the i10 is the best looking in class, but the SE benefits from body-coloured door handles and mirrors, a rear spoiler, integrated brake light and good looking 14in alloys.

The Hyundai i10 SE costs £9,795.

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2012/12 Toyota Hi-Lux HL2 D/C Pick-up

1 owner, FSH, 31,500 mls from new, p, fitted ball & jaw tow bar, load space liner, no MOT required, very clean & tidy inside & out, good tyres, radio/CD. Finance available HPI'd £15,250 + VAT

2010/10 Toyota Hi-Lux HL2 D/C P/U 2.5 Diesel

1 owner, service history, 125,750 mls, long MOT, serviced, fitted tow bar, loadspace liner, radio CD. A really nice truck, finance available STS £8,995 + VAT o.n.o.

2005/05 Toyota Hi-Lux HL2 Double Cab 2.5

2 owners, SH, 115,000 mls, fitted canopy, tow bar. Finance available STS, straight truck £6,500 + VAT o.n.o.

2010/60 Defender 110 XS ut StationWagon

1 owner, FSH, 28,500 mls, 12 mths test, serviced to date, half leather, air con, alloys, tow bar, reverse sensors, side steps, mudflaps. Warranty, superb condition £20,250 + VAT o.n.o.

2009/59 Landrover Defender 110 LBW Pick-up

1 owner, 42,500 mls, fully serviced, 12 mths MOT, single cab, fitted vinyl full length canopy, tow bar, clean inside & out. Finance available, test drive, HPI checked £11,750 + VAT o.n.o.

2012/12 Ford Transit 100 T350 FWD LWB H2

1 owner, FSH, 15,500 mls in superb condition, like new, ply lined, SLD. Finance available, PX considered £14,500 + VAT o.n.o.

2007/57 Landrover Defender 130 Double Cab High Capacity Pick-up

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2010/60 Landrover Discovery 4 SDV6 3.0L HSE

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2008/57 Ford Ranger 3.0 Wildtrack D/C, P/U

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2010 10	SEAT IBIZA 1.6 SPORT DSG 3-door, Red, 62,000 miles.....	£5,999
2012 12	SKODA FABIA 1.2 5-door, manual, Metallic Black, 17,000 miles, 1 owner	£7,299
2007 57	TOYOTA RAV 4 2.0 XT3 5-door. 4x4 Manual, Metallic Blue, 75,000 miles, FSH	£6,999
2011 11	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 EXCLUSIVE Estate Automatic. Green Metallic, 1 owner, 16,000 miles.....	£8,499
2009 59	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.8 DESIGN 5-door. Metallic Silver, 63,000 miles, FSH	£5,499
2008 08	VAUXHALL MERIVA 1.6 BREEZE HATCH 5-door Manual. Metallic Blue, 31,000 miles.....	£5,499
2002 02	VAUXHALL CORSA SXi 1.7 CDTi. Green Metallic, 74,000 miles.....	£1,999
2006 06	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.6 LIFE 7 Seater, Manual, 53,000 miles, FSH.....	£3,999
2008 08	VOLVO XC90 DE SE Geartronic . 7 Seats, 43,000 miles, half leather interior FSH Graphite Grey Metallic.....	£16,999
2013 13	VW TRANSPORTER CAMPER VAN Metallic Dark Wood, 11,000 miles, Brand New Camper 4 Berth Conversion done by Gee Wagen, Oswestry, top spec, air con, cruise control, FSH	NO VAT £38,500
2010 60	VW GOLF TDi PLUS SE 5-door, Manual, Metallic Black, 1 Owner, 34,000 miles, FSH.....	£10,499



2002 52 ALFA ROMEO SPIDER T-SPARK LUSSO Convertible. Silver Metallic, leather seats, alloy wheels, 58,100 miles **£3,699**



2010 60 PEUGEOT 3008 CROSSOVER ACTIVE 1.6 HDi Manual, Red Metallic, One Owner, only 6000 miles **£9,799**



2011 11 PEUGEOT 207 VERVE 1.4 5-door. Light Metallic Blue, 24,000 miles, 1 owner, FSH **£6,999**



2013 13 VW TRANSPORTER CAMPER VAN Metallic Dark Wood, 11,000 miles, Brand New Camper 4 Berth Conversion done by Gee Wagen, Oswestry, top spec, air con, cruise control, FSH **£38,500**



2010 10 MAZDA MX5 .18 ROADSTER Manual, Bright Red, only 6,000 miles, 1 Owner, Outstanding Condition, FSH **£10,999**



2011 11 NISSAN JUKE ACCENTA 1.6 5-door with premium pack. White, 1 owner, 28,000 miles, sat nav, FSH **£10,999**



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2006 06 VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.6 LIFE 7 Seater, Manual, 53,000 miles, FSH **£3,999**



2008 08 10 AUDI TT S QUATTRO 6-speed, Manual, Bright Red, 268 bhp, 70,000 miles, FSH, Full Leather **£15,999**



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items for sale

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BED SETTEE Terracotta colour in vgc, £50, Oswestry 07809 684729

BELLE CEMENT Concrete mixer, electric 240v hardly used, £130, ono, 01691 657342

BICYCLES Ladies racing bike, one mountain, £30 each, 01691 658271

BIKE CARRIER Will take two bikes, £15, 01691 654725

BOYS BIKE Suit age 4-8 12" wheels good condition, £15, 01691 652008

BOYS BIKE SUIT 4-8 years, £10, Telephone 01691 652008

BUNK BED With as new mattress futon seat underneath £40, Oswestry 07815 863701

CAR ROOF BOX In good condition £50, Oswestry 01691654725

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CARAVAN AWNING Kampa rally 260, draught skirt and cushion pads good condition, £175, 01691 860336

CARAVAN BATTERY XL 85, still under warranty, £30, 01691 670676

CHAIN SAW 14" Electric, Stihl E14, £130, ono, 01691 652021

CHAIN SAW Stihl E14, good working order, £150, 01691 652021

CHICKEN COOPS Suit 4-6 birds, very good condition, £30, 01691 657342

CHICO BABY WALKER Sit in type, new £45, sell for £20, 01691 652008

CHILDS APOLLO Police patrol bike 14" wheels stabilisers vgc, £20, 01691 656369

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CREAM CURTAINS 90x90 still in wrapper, £20, 01691 658221

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DOUBLE BED Drawer divan, with headboard as new, £80, as new, 07809 684729

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KITCHEN WORKTOP For sale brand new, £40, plus many offcuts, 01691 658496

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LADIES LIGHTWEIGHT Bicycle 531, 14 gears, Coventry Eagle hardly used £50, 01691 831333

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MORPHY RICHARDS Set of stainless pans, with lids, never used, £8, 01691 778119

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OVAL DROP LEAF TABLE Dark oak, surface requires some work, £8, 01691 679570

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PIANO STOOL Dark wood, with upholstered cushion in lovely condition, £50 ono, 01691 650055

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The post is term time only (plus two extra weeks during non-term time) for 35 hours per week for 33 term-time weeks plus 2 out of term week per year (35 weeks in total).

If you have the above skills please visit the school website (www.ellesmere.com) for an application pack. Completed applications are to be submitted by Monday 26th May 2014 and send to the Personal Secretary, Ellesmere College, Ellesmere, Shropshire SY12 9AB. Tel: 01691 622321 or email harriet.jones@ellesmere.com.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its students and expects its staff to share this commitment. Applicants must be prepared to undergo Child Protection Screening, including checks with past employers and DBS. References will be sought and verified at the short-listing stage as part of our safeguarding children procedures.

Ellesmere College is a Woodard School



Ellesmere
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The College requires a

Temporary Teacher of Drama

for September 2014 for one term

The successful candidate will be able to teach Drama throughout the 11-18 age range. In the Sixth Form both A levels and the International Baccalaureate Diploma are offered (knowledge of IB is not essential). The successful candidate will also be actively involved in the oversight of extra-curricular Drama, supporting student directors in the College's House Drama Festival. Single accommodation may be available in return for involvement in boarding duties.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its students and expects its staff to share this commitment. Applicants must be prepared to undergo child protection screening including checks with past employers and CRB.

Closing date: Monday, 19 May
Further details and application forms are available from the College website, www.ellesmere.com or from The Headmaster's Secretary, Ellesmere College, Ellesmere, Shropshire SY12 9AB.

Tel: 01691 622321 Fax 01691 624458

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Web site: www.ellesmere.com

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We are currently recruiting to the role of Caretaker/Estates Facilities Officer for a fixed term of 12 months. The role will lead in maintaining high standards on our estates by contributing to the management of our properties and areas. We are seeking an enthusiastic, flexible and committed person who will ideally have had previous experience in the areas of caretaking and/ or estate/facilities management, and with experience of working in social housing.

In this key role, you will support both the Neighbourhoods and Responsive Repairs Teams, and you must be able to demonstrate partnership working with both internal and external agencies and be a committed team player. A large part of the role will be maintaining communal areas by carrying out physical daily inspections and general cleaning of estates keeping the areas rubbish free and safe and will involve the use of a work provided vehicle.

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You will need to demonstrate some degree of flexibility with your working pattern and must be willing to undertake training as and when required.

For an informal discussion please contact George Murphy, Statagic Repairs Manager, or Jo Cosgrove, Senior Neighbourhoods Officer on 01691 677278 or to apply for this post please visit www.shropshire.gov.uk. Further information can be found at www.starhousing.org.uk.

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NEWS in brief

Students attend fire training day

A group of students from Oswestry found out what life is like in the emergency services when they spent a day training with the fire service headquarters in the West Midlands.

The students, who are studying the first diploma in public services at Walford and North Shropshire College in Oswestry, attended a Fire Service experience day at Handsworth Fire Station in Birmingham.

They received basic life support training, visited the appliance bay and inspected fire engines and the major incident command vehicle as well as seeing firefighters at work.

Voucher scheme to be expanded

AN expansion of the Vauxhall MasterFit Service Club voucher scheme has been announced by award-winning motor dealer Arthurs of Oswestry.

The club offers half price MOT's and 25% off servicing and repairs at both Arthurs branches in Oswestry and Newtown.

Said Mark Evans, Arthurs of Oswestry service manager: "We are one of the leading dealers to promote this discount scheme and further details are available at either branch."

Anyone interested can contact Arthurs on 01691 652235.

Fasteners named as top company in the region

By Graham Breeze

AN Oswestry-based firm has been named as a finalist in the search to find the UK's best company in the Business Innovation category.

GWR Fasteners was named best small business in the West Midlands region in the 2014 FSB WorldPay UK Business Awards in the Business Innovation category.

The business will now go onto the national final where they could win £10,000 as overall UK winner. This year more than 950 businesses entered the awards.

Friends launch a new service

A NEW service to help support older people has been launched.

Friends Courtenay Forde-Johnston and Sarah Norman have joined forces to launch a service with a difference for the elderly, offering home help and companionship, which has been developed based on the pair's own experiences of supporting elderly relatives.

The Silver Agency is based in Wrexham but covers Ellesmere, Oswestry, Whitchurch, Chirk, Malpas and Llangollen.

The Silver Agency say it aims to support people of all ages in their retirement, liaising with family members where appropriate to keep them informed if any issues arise.

For more information, call The Silver Agency on 01978 897388 or visit www.the-silveragency.co.uk.

More than half of over 75s in the UK are now reported to live alone and an estimated million plus are left lonely.

GWR Fasteners Limited was founded in 2009 by Gary Robinson, a toolmaker by trade with over 25 years experience in the engineering industry.

The company is based at Weston Farm in Oswestry and is jointly owned by Gary and Jude Robinson. They have several staff employed from the local area.

The company is a standard fasteners distributor and also a manufacturer of special fasteners and precision components.

The company also manufactures their GWR Colourfast - coloured stainless steel fasteners and components - and this capability has been recognised by the judges of the FSB WorldPay UK Business Awards in their Business Innovation award category.

Mr Robinson said: "This is a great accolade for us. Our company is constantly growing, particularly our manufacturing capability, and we are very much looking forward to the national final which takes place this month."

David Longstaff, local area development manager for the FSB, said: "We've had a high number of top quality entries this year and it's a great achievement for GWR Fasteners Limited to have been selected as the Business Innovation winner for the West Midlands region."



Gary Robinson, joint owner of GWR Fasteners, with the business innovation award

Law firm has mark of quality for wills

A law firm has gained accreditation in the Law Society's Wills and Inheritance Quality Scheme (WIQS).

The accreditation for GHP Legal, which has offices in Oswestry, Llangollen and Wrexham, comes just weeks after the firm announced it was compliant with a new code of practice launched by the Society of Trustees and Estates Practitioners.

The Law Society's Wills and Inheritance Quality Scheme (WIQS) provides a best practice quality mark for wills and estate administration advice consumers can trust.

Practices applying for WIQS accreditation must demonstrate compliance with the Wills and Inheritance Protocol and, where necessary, can amend existing policies or draft new ones to meet the requirements.

John Marshall, a partner with GHP Legal, said: "Having WIQS accreditation shows our clients we follow best practice procedures and meet the highest standards of technical expertise in delivering wills and inheritance advice, as well as helping them to make a confident and informed choice of local legal practice by giving them the information they need."



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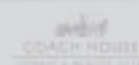
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Liverpool	£59.00	£82.00
Birmingham	£82.00	£110.00

Night Out Returns
Shrewsbury £50.00 - £60.00
Wrexham £45.00 - £54.00

Chamber open to all town business

AS a Chamber of Commerce we are often perceived to exist solely for the benefit of retail business in Oswestry and that we are motivated only to increase footfall within the town centre.

In truth, this is just one of the areas in which we take interest and try to develop. The true object of the Chamber is to protect and further the aims and interests of the industrialists and traders of Oswestry and district as a whole and it with this in mind that we extend an open invitation to businesses of all types.

Together, businesses of all sizes and all sectors can share information and advice, present a united voice for the mutual benefit of Oswestry and, if necessary, challenge those seeking to impose a different stamp on the town.

If you are trading in the Oswestry and district area and would like to be kept in the loop with local developments we have the ear of the Town Council and that of Shropshire Councillors.

Oswestry Chamber of Commerce meets on the first Wednesday of the month at the Wynnstey Hotel from 6pm to 7pm.

HEATHER NOBLE
Chairman

Broadband cash will be lost if council can't pay

RURAL areas around Oswestry could miss out on a near £12 million grant to speed up snail-like broadband.

Shropshire Council was awarded £11.38m by Broadband Delivery UK, the Government project for broadband, at the end of February.

But the money will only be handed over if the council can provide match-funding for the scheme - and bosses face losing the cash altogether if they cannot do it by the end of June.

The council has been working with pressure group the Shropshire and Marches Campaign for Better Broadband to raise the cash to improve internet speeds.

But Patrick Cosgrove, spokesman for the campaign group, said they had so far hit a brick wall.

He said the group had written to Sajid Javid and Ed Vaisey, ministers at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, asking them to relax the timescale or even remove the matching requirement.

But he conceded the prospect of losing the cash was very real - and called on the Government to take action or face an "absolute outrage" from the people of the county.

"How do you find £11.38m matching money by the end

by Wayne Beese

of June? The quick answer is with the greatest of difficulty," Mr Cosgrove said.

"Of course it's great that Shropshire has been awarded £11.38m of the Superfast Extension Programme because it desperately needs it. It is also lunacy that we can only draw down however much we can match.

"To possibly make matters worse, one form of matched money that Shropshire has been relying on, is European money from the Local Enterprise Partnerships. But the EU is now questioning the legality of that option.

"One could argue that despite its limited reserves and its savings targets, Shropshire Council could increase council tax, or could adjust its capital expenditure programme. The county only has until June 30.

Solicitors raising cash for air ambulance



Beth Harrison, Neil Lorimer, Kay Kelly, "Maac", David Battisby and Sophie Davies.

STAFF from solicitors Lanyon Bowdler will be taking part in the 12-mile Walk 4Life fundraiser on Sunday in aid of the West Midland Air Ambulance Service.

The firm is an enthusiastic supporter of this charity and Neil Lorimer, partner and head of the personal injury department said: "I act for a number of clients who have benefited from the services of the Midlands Air Ambulance, without which, many may not be here today."

Sophie Davies and Beth Harrison from the firm's clinical negligence department, will be taking part in the walk.

Since 1991, the charity has responded to more than 40,000 missions averaging 2,000 per year.

Kay Kelly, partner and head of the clinical negligence department, said: "Lanyon Bowdler are delighted to be able to support two of our clinical negligence lawyers raise some much needed funds."

NEWS in brief

Hospice worker scoops award

A DEDICATED member of staff at Morda's Hope House Children's hospice has won a national award.

Shirley McCann, who had no prior retail experience but worked her way up to become a manager, has scooped the Hospice Retail Staff Member of the Year award.

She received the accolade at the Help the Hospices Retail Conference 2014 held in Birmingham, an annual national event run by the national hospice care charity to develop knowledge and best practice among hospice retailers.

She has worked for the hospice since 2007.

Students given job tips from MEP

STUDENTS from Walford and North Shropshire College's Oswestry Campus attended the College's fifth annual Learner Conference hosted by BT at Whitlington House.

Students were given a talk given by West Midland MEP Nikki Sinclair.

She said that if they believed truly that they wanted to do or achieve something, then it could be possible and they should seize every opportunity to achieve it.

Students took part in workshops covering the BT apprenticeship programme and employability skills.



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- Our meetings are not dominated by men in suits
- Oswestry Chamber of Commerce is not just a 'talking shop' - our voice helps get things done
- We're not a networking group - but we do passionately believe in networking
- You don't have to stand up and do a 60 seconds pitch at our meetings

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Join us **TODAY** and help make Oswestry stronger!



THE ARTS

Singer looks forward to Eisteddfod appearance

by Pam Kingsley

POPULAR Welsh singer Shan Cothi is about to step in the shoes of Oscar-winning actress Emma Thompson.

The former West End star will transform herself into the rough Cockney schemer, Mrs Nellie Lovett, in Sweeney Todd - The Demon Barber of Fleet Street which will be the curtain-raiser for the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod on Monday, July 7.

She will be performing alongside old friends, opera superstar Bryn Terfel and the top tenor Wynne Evans aka Gio Compario in the Go Compare TV ads, in what promises to be a sensational opening night.

Shan said she is delighted to be part of the iconic international festival, and is concentrating on learning the role of the formidable Nellie Lovett.

"It's scary to be honest", she said. "It really is a huge role and I'm fully aware the audience will be full of real fans of the genre, people who know Stephen Sondheim's work inside out."

"And while I have watched every production I can to get a feel for the role, I want to put my own stamp on the part."

I do have a lot to live up to however, as there have been some amazing performers who have played the role. People like Angela Lansbury, who was the original Mrs Lovett, and Emma Thompson who won critical acclaim in the role opposite Bryn in New York just last month.

"Performers of that quality are the



Shan Cothi is about to step in the shoes of Oscar-winning actress Emma Thompson

benchmark really and I'm going to have to work hard to get this important role just right."

"I've taken on something really big and a bit out of my comfort zone."

"I'm spending three hours a day learning the part and thinking about how I want to present this mature, scheming, rough old Cockney bird to

the audience. It's going to be some transformation to be honest."

Shan said she accepted the role the second she was asked knowing, she'd be appearing alongside Bryn Terfel and Wynne Evans.

"I competed at Llangollen many times but this will be my first appearance in an evening concert."

CHRONICLE



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Pictured left to right: Kate Howell (Agency Owner), Harriet Fallon (Senior Customer Consultant) and Daniel Graham.

Source: ABC

Acoustic workshop by talented blues artist

GIG GUIDE

with Edward Roberts

CALLING all blues fans, the extremely talented Chris Quinn will be holding a special acoustic blues guitar workshop at The Willow Gallery, Oswestry this Saturday.

Whether you're just starting out on guitar or fancy yourself an old hand and looking to learn a few new tricks, make sure you head along.

A gifted musician with plenty of experience, Chris has performed at venues around the world, including BB King's Blues Club in New York and The Royal Albert Hall, London.

Even if you don't play an instrument you still have something to look forward to as Chris will performing a gig after the workshop is over. The workshop will running from 5pm - 6:30pm, with the concert starting at 8pm. Tickets are £10.

The Whittington Chamber Music Festival is in full swing this week, with the final two concerts taking place tonight (Thursday) and tomorrow, Friday.

Over at The Royal Oak this week there will be music from Odd Folk, who will be performing at the venue on Friday night.

The Bristol based band live up to their name, as the play an interesting



Chris Quinn, holding a workshop in Oswestry on Saturday

mixture of traditional folk and flamenco. The gig starts at 9pm and is free entry.

Acoustic duo Hannah and Brian will be taking their act to the Wynnstay Hotel, Oswestry this Friday. The talented pair performs a variety of songs both old and new from their ever expanding repertoire.

From Otis Redding and The Beat-

les to Joss Stone and Adele, they have something for everyone. The show starts at 9pm so make sure you don't miss it.

Glasgow's Sloth Metropolis will be bringing their unique brand of sloth inspired prog folk to the Hermon Chapel, Oswestry this Saturday. The gig starts at 7:30pm with entry costing £4.50.

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Treat to see birds heading out of Africa

AS I scribble these notes, I am gazing up into azure blue skies, lush green around me and the smell of heat and dust in my nostrils.

I am watching swallows and house martins zip across the landscape, seeking out puddles of water to drink from and some soft mud from the hillside streams to bolster their nests.

The sounds assailing me are of gold finches singing and sparrows squabbling.

Above all of these there is the soft cooing of collared doves and wood pigeons.

The sun will set in an hour and with it the swifts will scythe their way through the warm dusk, silhouetting their sharpened and darkened forms before the glowing horizon.

But I am not watching that sun set in Shropshire (perhaps my reference to the azure blue skies would have given that away!).

Instead I find myself with the Berbers in the High Atlas mountains of Morocco and joining the swifts in the skies at sunset are the large and lumbering white storks for which the nearby city of Marrakech is famous.

Lucky
This might not be a naturalist's dream, there are after all terribly caged tortoises, lizards, song birds, snakes and monkeys - and the Moroccan donkeys are a miserable sight.

Yet for me, those creatures lucky enough to find themselves living free in Marrakech's streets and amongst the Berber villages of the mountains, are surprisingly reminiscent of a Salopian spring.

As I hike the snow-line with my wife, we look down on Kestrels hovering and quails scurrying.

A whitethroat calls from down in the valley and a common buzzard circles majestically in line with our altitude.

The rather nice thing about doing this in Morocco is that the sun is always shining.

Just over the Atlases and the gushing springs lies

ON THE WILDSIDE

with Ben Waddams



the Sahara desert, barren and unforgiving and yet all the species above mentioned must have crossed desert and dune if they were to inhabit the oasis of Marrakech.

Granted many, such as the ubiquitous collared and rock doves and the wood pigeons are born and bred in the country, but their ancestors would have had to rub shoulders with the old camel caravans and desert traders in order to make a living in these harsh surroundings.

However many of the birds I see here in Morocco are on their way 'up' to our shores.

The martins and swallows are mostly all in the county but the swifts have yet to arrive in their numbers and I feel privileged to have heard their charismatic wheeling and screaming cries a few days before they descend upon our quiet villages and luscious countryside.

I would certainly recommend this part of Africa for the wildlife enthusiast, the culture-vulture and the seasoned hiker but as I close my diary, it must be admitted that ostensibly one should perhaps travel further south, east or west to find the more exotic wildlife species.

Many of those that inhabit the regions surrounding me as I write, seem to have decided that the UK and indeed, Shropshire, is where they'd truly like to be.

And I for one certainly think we should all take that as a rather nice compliment.

Ben's evocative wildlife prints can be found in the Gallery Tearooms, Princess Street, in Shrewsbury.



Beneath brilliant skies, Ben is seen hiking in the High Atlas, Morocco

Vandalised toilets open doors again

PUBLIC toilets which shut after becoming a magnet for vandalism have re-opened next to a county beauty spot.

The toilets, in Cremorne Gardens, by the Mere in Ellesmere, closed 18 months ago, but about £5,000 has now been spent on sprucing them up.

The work was organised by the friends of the mere group, which said children were forced to use nearby bushes while the toilets were closed.

The toilets, which are owned by Shropshire Council, were closed after vandals smashed down the doors and deliberately blocked the loos.

Funds, which were obtained from entrust and the Ellesmere area local joint committee, have been spent on new doors and windows, and painting the wood work on the outside of the building.

David Farncombe, member of the volunteer group, said: "it has been an on-going problem and we hope the work we have carried out will deter vandals.

"The toilets are sited right by the popular children's playground, in desperation children were forced to use the surrounding shrubbery causing a public hygiene issue, as well as making the area unpleasant.

"Alternative facilities are more than 500 metres away - too far for a 'desperate' child.

"Shropshire council cut-backs have delayed repairs being carried out, and so, friends of the mere decided to step in.

"The local volunteers began by obtaining grants to employ builders to carry out repairs and to make the building more resilient to further wanton attack.

"Then members undertook plumbing work themselves, in conjunction with Ellesmere Anglers Association.

"All this effort resulted in the toilets being re-opened in time for Easter.

"The many visitors to the Mere park, both local and from the wider area, especially the children who enjoy the playground, now have good cause to be grateful to friends of the Mere."

Mr Farncombe added: "As well as the obvious benefits of having the toilets back in use, this work will also help in the application to obtain green flag status for the mere park."

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Source: ABC

Work on historic gardens underway

AN ambitious project to restore an historic Chirk garden to its former glory has been officially launched.

Whitehurst Gardens, which were historically part of the Chirk Castle estate, were created in the Civil War and contain a hill which experts believe is a motte – an early form of castle.

Last week a project to restore the gardens was officially launched with a presentation to Chirk Town Council.

Members of the proposed Whitehurst Friends Trust will have a long-term challenge on their hands as since the Second World War the gardens have been left to themselves, becoming overgrown to the extent that the hill can hardly be seen through the trees and plants.

But Glynis Shaw, chairwoman of the Clwyd branch of the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust, said the area was worth preserving.

"It's a truly unique garden. Not many gardens were started in the Civil War, and it contained a very unusual water feature in a sort of triangle shape," she said.

"Those are just some of the reasons why it should be restored. We want to actually restore it to what it once was."

Help flooding in as Ian plans for channel swim

A FUNDRAISING swimmer from Oswestry who is in training for an English Channel adventure has thanked everyone who has backed his efforts so far.

Ian Davies, from Oswestry, is planning to take part in a relay swim of the channel in July in aid of spinal injuries charity Aspire.

by Iain St John

And rather than asking for cash donations towards his £2,000 target he has set up a network of collection boxes around Oswestry for DVDs, CDs and games.

Mr Davies, 53, of Upper Well Close, Oswestry, said the items would be sold, with the proceeds going to Aspire.

The fundraiser said thanks to the great public support, his money-spinning plan is going well.

He said: "All the kind donations of DVDs and CDs have raised nearly £300 to date."

"I am now almost 50 per cent of the way to my target of £2,000, many thanks to everyone that has made a donation."

"I am still in need of any unloved, unused DVDs and CDs and they can be dropped off at the leisure centre in Oswestry, Upstairs Downstairs or the Launderette in Upper Church Street."

"All donations will be greatly received."

"Thank you for helping me to help others."

Mr Davies swam the Solent last year for Aspire and is in training to take on the English Channel on July 1, leaving from Dover and landing "somewhere" on the French coast.

The Oswestry grandfather said he had chosen to support Aspire for a variety of reasons.

Mr Davies, who works for the Prince's Trust as a development tutor, said: "Obviously our local orthopaedic hospital at Gobowen does a lot for spinal patients and I am ex-services and lot of guys have come back from Iraq and Afghanistan with spinal injuries and are helped by Aspire."

"I am just hoping people will drop off their DVDs and CDs to help the appeal."

Travel agents cook up charity cash



Gary Smout helping to raise money for Hope House

STAFF at a travel agents in Oswestry have been showing off their baking skills for charity.

Workers at the First Choice store staged a bake-off competition in aid of Hope House Children's Hospice at Morda.

The hospice has been chosen as the shop's charity of the year and staff have various fundraising events planned.

The first event was held with six members of staff put their baking skills to the test, coming up with a wide variety of baked goodies.

Store manager Sally Roberts said: "We choose a different charity to help each year and this year we chose Hope House Hospice because it is a local and such an important charity."

"In the end a banana and chocolate loaf by staff member Gary Smout went the quickest and so Gary was chosen as the winner."

"It is a great cause and we are happy to support it."

NEWS in brief

Village pub has expansion plan

A VILLAGE pub is planning to extend its business so it does not have to turn away customers wishing to stay the night.

Bosses at the Barley Mow Inn at Trefonen near Oswestry say turning down business is giving the wrong image of Shropshire to tourists as it promotes itself as a visitor friendly county.

Landlord Derek Jones has applied to Shropshire Council to alter and extend the property to provide an improved kitchen, a disabled toilet, a store room, a function room and guest accommodation.

The Council hopes to make a decision by June 4.

Tenants sought for allotments

BUDDING gardeners in Baschurch are invited to get their hands dirty and take on an allotment.

The village's three-acre allotment site was opened in March 2011 and has approximately 60 ground level plots of various sizes.

There is a one-off fee of £10 to join the association. The rent for a half plot (125sqm) is £40 a year and a quarter plot (62.5sqm) is £30 per year.

For more information contact Sarah on 07729 943246, email sarah@baschurchallotments.co.uk or visit www.baschurchallotments.co.uk

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Berriew on course for hat-trick of success

BERRIEW stayed on course for a hat-trick of trophies this season after edging out Waterloo Rovers 3-2 in the final of the Spar Mid Wales League Cup.

Having seen their title hopes take a dive in recent weeks, it has been the perfect response from Berriew who are also in the semi-final of both the Central Wales Cup and Montgomeryshire Challenge Cup.

Waterloo, last season's beaten finalists, played their part in an exciting league cup clash, twice coming back to level before being downed by a strike from Jackson Hassanyeh.

Berriew took an early lead with a penalty from Marc Jones after Will Pritchard had handled, but Rovers were back on terms when an unmarked Marcus Ashley produced a neat finish from a set piece.

Rhydian Morris then restored the Berriew advantage when swivelling to fire home a Craig Pearce cross, but Charlie Proctor had Waterloo back on terms before half time with a terrific free kick that flew into the top corner from 25 yards.

There was little between the sides in the second half, but Berriew prevailed when Hassanyeh beat keeper Gareth Ashley from the edge of the box.

In the final, to be played on Saturday, May 17 at Llandrindod Wells, Berriew will meet Bow Street who overcame Aberaeron 4-2 on penalties after the tie finished 2-2 after extra-time.

Mike Pearce's side are also in the last four of the Central Wales Cup when they face Knighton Town. The winners will meet Llanaifair United in the final at Newtown's Latham Park.

Berriew have also reached the last four of the MP Foulkes Montgomeryshire Cup when they meet Carno, with the date for the game yet to be confirmed.

If they progress, they will meet Waterloo in the final.

Finalists in the mood for goals

THE Keys and The Lodge warmed up for tonight's Consolation Cup final in the Roche North Shropshire Sunday League by sharing the points in a 4-4 draw in the league.

Josh Jones gave the Lodge an eighth minute lead, but the Keys levelled on 16 minutes with a Daryl Davies 30-yard free-kick.

Liam Lightwood headed in a cross to restore the Lodge advantage in the 21st minute but The Keys were level again when Tom Freeman scored from the spot.

Shawn Melusi then put the Keys ahead on 39 minutes only for Lodge to make it 3-3 two minutes from the break via Josh Jones.

Jones hit a hat trick a minute into the second half but a spirited Keys side hit back with an equaliser on 56 minutes from Melusi.

Oak Inn came from behind to beat Tavern 6-4, Jon Beckett hitting a hat-trick.

Carl Wilson and Todd Roberts both bagged a brace for Oak with Sam Kerr's and Ben Williams also on target. Joe Kilvert got No.4.

Fixtures - Thursday Consolation Cup Final at Morda (6.30pm): Lodge Inn v The Keys. **Sunday:** Duddleston Heath v Tavern. **League Cup final at Wem Town (6.30pm):** Oak Inn v Athletic Market.

Morda book final ticket – and title hopes boosted

MORDA United kept alive their hopes of a league and cup double in the Mercian Regional Premier League with two excellent results – beating AFC Bridgnorth 4-2 in the league while reaching the final of the cup with a 1-0 victory at Whitchurch Alport.

At Bridgnorth, Morda took a third minute lead through in-form goal scorer Chris Bishop but the hosts levelled on the half hour with a long shot from Lewis Ayres.

Shawn Melussi then put the Weston Road men back in front when hitting the roof of the net with a right foot volley from outside the box.

Five minutes before the break Jack Hughes extended the lead when beating the

keeper in a one-on-one before Melussi made it four at half time with a curled free kick.

They retained control in the second half, although Bridgnorth did pull one goal back with a far post header from Will Meredith.

Morda's slim title hopes improved at the weekend when their win took them to third in the league while leaders Oakengates Athletic drew. Top two sides Oakengates and Church Stretton are four points above Morda with two games to play while Morda have three games left.

Stretton travel to face Oakengates on Saturday when a draw would leave Morda – who host Allscott on Saturday (3pm) – needing to win their three final league

games to take the title.

A few days before, Morda secured a place in the final of the Premier Division Cup after a hard fought 1-0 passage at Whitchurch.

Craig Rogers' side suffered an early blow when losing Paul Bache with a recurrence of a thigh injury, while Alport striker O'Keefe received an early yellow for after a challenge on Sam Litchfield.

This was to prove crucial as a challenge later in the game on Shaheen Miah earned a second yellow for the player and forced Whitchurch to complete the encounter with 10 men.

The game then opened out as both

sides sought the winner and just when extra-time seemed likely the accurate left foot of Shaheen Miah earned Morda a place in the final when his free-kick went over the wall and into the corner of the net.

Morda have an attractive final to look forward to when they face Shifnal United 97 at the New Bucks Head, Telford on Saturday, May 17 (4pm).

WESTON RHYN, the Shropshire Challenge Cup winners, continue to languish at the foot of the table after slumping 5-2 at home to title chasing Church Stretton.

They were facing a big week, looking for points at Prees on Wednesday and home to Ketley Bank on Saturday.

Spar scrap for honours going down to the wire

LLANFAIR United kept alive their Spar Mid Wales League division one challenge with a hard-fought 1-0 win over Carno at the Mount as the title race heads to the wire.

Victory put Llanfair top for 48 hours, before Llandrindod Wells – who lost 2-0 at Four Crosses in their previous game – returned to the summit by one point with a 3-2 Bank Holiday success at Berriew.

It means that the destiny of the title will be decided in the final run of games on Saturday, with Llandod needing to defeat visitors Montgomery to make sure of the crown while Llanfair, who host relegated Builth Wells, will be ready to pounce should they slip up.

A fine strike from Luke Gethin five minutes into the second half proved enough to earn Llanfair a 1-0 win over Carno, but the title chasers needed a fine penalty save from Lee Andrew to preserve that lead, with the keeper not only saving the spot kick but also the follow up.

Richie Powell scored twice, including the winner, in Llandrindod's 3-2 success at BERRIEW who rested most of their first team with three cup competitions on the horizon.

Ben Jones also found the net as the visitors led 2-0 at half time while Berriew's assistant boss David Jones bagged a brace to level matters in the second period.

At the other end of the table, DYFFRYN BANW notched two wins to keep alive their hopes of escaping the drop zone.

First up, they ran out 5-0 winners against fellow strugglers Builth Wells with Arwel Jones and Tom Foulkes both scoring twice, and Aled Davies getting the other.

And they followed it up with a 3-0 home win against Aberystwyth University on Monday, meaning that victory in their last game at Carno on Saturday would lift them of the drop zone, pushing Welshpool into the bottom two.

It has been a terrific season for Llanfair whose reserves after champions of the JT Hughes Montgomeryshire League division one.

Ollie first in Paragon's time trial

MANY familiar faces as well as several new riders took to the start line for the first round of the Oswestry Paragon/Stuart Barkley Cycles time trial series.

There was a comfortable win for Ollie Blake of OO Tri who came home in 22 minutes 57 seconds, ahead of junior rider Will Pickles who is riding for Mid Shropshire Wheelers this year.

Pickles clocked a personal best time of 24min31 putting him seven seconds ahead of the fastest Paragon rider Andy Howell but the margin would have been much less if Howell had not been badly delayed by traffic in Whittington.

Fourth place went to Stephen Owen of Hafren CC in 24-42, with Tom Richardson improving on his best ride of last year to take fifth in 25-05.

The Friday evening events will continue until August 22 with signing on taking place in the car park opposite the Queens Head.

Double delight as Saints are the comeback kings

Aberystwyth Town 2 The New Saints 3

TWO-GOAL substitute Greg Draper sparked a dramatic second half turnaround as The New Saints lifted the Welsh Cup with victory over Aberystwyth Town in a breathless final at Wrexham's Racecourse.

Trailing 2-0 after just 12 minutes, the newly crowned Welsh Premier champions struggled to make any impression in the first half against an Aber side chasing their first cup triumph in 114 years.

But they pulled the game out of the fire with three goals late in the second period, Draper scoring twice before Mike Wilde applied the knockout blow three minutes from time as the Saints completed a league and cup double for the second time in three years.

FOOTBALL

By John Bridgwater



turned on the edge of the box only to see his shot comfortably clutched by Lewis.

With Aber making such a flying start, TNS knew they had their work cut out, and could have fallen further behind on the half hour when another Williams free kick caused uncertainty in the defence but Stuart Jones' header lacked any real venom and was held by Paul Harrison in goal.

TNS struggled to get any tempo into their game, their lack of ideas showing when Phil Baker fired well over the bar from distance in the 33rd minute.

But they found some attacking enterprise moments later when Fraughan jinked his way around the defence and squared for Finley whose low shot was saved.

Little had gone right for the league champions in the first half but, as a sign of intent, the players were out early for second half with renewed purpose.

And they were soon on the front foot with increased tempo, passing the ball with more precision, but contin-

ued to find the Seasiders a tough nut to crack.

Defender Stuart Jones was a towering presence in the heart of the Aber defence while Lewis was proving solid in goal as he pulled off a smart save to hold Wilde's header on 55 minutes.

TNS continued to take the game to their opponents, and Aber had some good fortune when Peter Hoy appeared to handle a cross from sub Mullan in the 70th minute.

But three minutes later, the Saints got back into the game when Hoy was this time penalised for handling another Mullan cross from the left byline, and Draper made no mistake from the spot.

With the Saints pushing higher upfield, Aber were still a threat on the break, Kellaway foiled by some covering defence from Venables' inviting right wing cross into the goalmouth.

But TNS now had the bit between their teeth, playing with increasing urgency, and were back on terms five minutes later when Chris Marriott whipped a contested free kick into the goalmouth from the right of the box and Draper was at the back post to head home.

The New Zealand striker then had a chance of a hat-trick but fired into the side netting after being put clear down the right flank.

But a third goal did arrive in the 87th minutes when Wilde neatly volleyed home after Spender had crossed from the right after another telling move.

Aber were still not finished, Stuart Jones heading wide from a long throw-in by Hoy in the dying seconds - the final play of an excellent final fittingly played out by the two highest scorers in the Welsh Premier this season.

Wales manager Chris Coleman on hand to present the trophy to the victorious Saints at the final whistle, leaving Aber to reflect on what might have been.



Greg Draper levels the Cup final against Aber from close range. Pics: Kevin Hughes.



Mike Wilde nets the winner as the New Saints complete a league and cup double

Rangers runners-up

ELLESMERE'S young guns wrapped up runners-up spot in their debut Midland Floodlit Youth League Premier North season after two victories in four days.

They negotiated the near 200-mile round trip to Rugby Town by securing a narrow 3-2 victory before following it up with a 2-1 home success over Boldmere St Michaels.

Against Rugby, Rangers found themselves a goal down early on but roared back through a Josh Parker brace, both from Mike O'Reilly set pieces.

The home side rallied before the interval to level matters, but Sean Griffiths sealed the three points in the 72nd minute and there was even time for a rare Jay Stoker missed penalty in the final five minutes after substitute Will Twyford had been brought down.

Three days later, Birmingham based Boldmere visitors were then put to the

sword with Ellesmere running out 2-1 winners.

Matt Jones curled in an exquisite free kick in the fourth minute to set the Swans on their way but, despite playing some excellent football in the opening period, had to wait until Scott Ryan doubled their advantage in the 61st minute when pouncing on a rebound after he had missed the initial opportunity.

Boldmere pulled a goal back but the home side held on for the win that put them in good heart for tonight's Midland Floodlit Youth League Cup final with Hednesford at Bromsgrove. Two days before, they were hosts to Hinckley United in the league.

"Achieving second place is a magnificent achievement as the target pre-season was just to stay up and the players should be incredibly proud of their success this campaign," said manager Dan Stevens.

Olympian is English champion



OSWESTRY Olympian Steve Roberts is the new M60 English Duathlon champion.

Competing at the English Age group Duathlon Championships at Newby Hall in North Yorkshire.

Roberts was first M60 male home in an excellent time of 2hr 23mins 13secs, finishing 87th overall. The event comprises a 10km run, 42k bike ride and 5km run.

Club looks for runners for summer

OSWESTRY Olympians are calling all runners and triathletes as they gear up for a busy season of summer races.

The first of the Olympians organised races is the Mynydd Myfyr Hill Run on Sunday, May 18 (start 11am), which is a terrific introduction to off-road running and racing.

It is approximately 6.5 kilometres (four miles) of mixed terrain on trail paths, through farmland and wooded areas and country lanes including climbs totalling 150 metres plus (500ft). This year the event has moved to the Sunday before the delightful Trefonen Hill Walk weekend, which raises funds for various charities.

Other races to note for the calendars is the Park Hall 5k on Wednesday, June 11, which is a great race for beginners and a great course for a fast time.

The Ellesmere 10k takes place on Sunday, August, 24 which promises to be as fast and as popular as ever. This race genuinely does have personal best potential for runners prepared to take it on.

Town keep hopes alive

FC OSWESTRY Town maintained their promotion push in the Mercian Regional League division one after battling back for a 4-2 victory at Oakengates Rangers.

It's a busy week for Town who visited local rivals Oswestry Villa on Wednesday night before travelling to struggling Shawbury reserves on Saturday.

OSWESTRY VILLA's disappointing run continued as they slipped to third from bottom after their 4-2 loss at Bishop's Castle in the league and on Monday, the Gatacre men crashed out of the division one cup with a 10-0 semi-final mauling to Chids Ercall at Morda.

Meanwhile, Oswestry Boys Club under-12s lifted the junior Powell Cup with a 3-1 victory over Market Drayton in the final, but Ellesmere missed out in the senior cup after being downed 3-0 by Malpas.

Nimantha sparkles as Glas rally for first victory

A FINE all round display from Ruch Nimantha steered Glas to their first win of the campaign in the Manby Bowdler Shropshire League division two after overcoming Bishop's Castle by four wickets.

Put in to bat, Castle were restricted to 123-9 following some excellent ground fielding, with Nimantha helping himself to 4-34 with support coming from Tim Morris (2-23).

The Glas reply began brightly with a quick 16 from opener Andy Griffiths but a middle order collapse saw four wickets fall as the Oswestry side slumped to 40-5.

But they rallied thanks to a brilliant innings of 58 from man-of-the-match Nimantha as he steered the team home to its first victory and 20 valuable points.

ELLESMERE were involved in a tight affair before edging out Wellington III by

eight runs to maintain their winning start to division two.

Batting first, they posted 149 with Fraser Duncan and Vansh Bajaj both making 23, before dismissing their rivals for 141 in reply, George Duncan taking 3-28 and Graham Cowey and Bradley Chapman two wickets apiece. Ellesmere are joint top of the table after two games.

CAE GLAS II crashed to a 69-run defeat to MONTGOMERY II in the reserve division two after being skittled for just 71 in response to 140.

Shaun Southern had taken 5-30 in 12.4 overs for the Glas, but the batting failed to fire in reply with opener George Candler the only player to get into double figures with 11. Joe Haycock took 3-11 for Monty whose Jonathan Williams top scored in their innings with 27.

Matt Knight hit a half century as WELSHPOOL II secure a convincing winning draw against Condover II to consolidate their position among the early leaders in the same division.

Batting first, Pool racked up 223-6 with Knight dismissed for 58, before Steve Monk's 3-17 helped reduce the Shrewsbury side to 79-8 by the close.

A fine all round display from Adam Lewis steered ELLESMERE II to an unlikely 49-run win over Forton II in the reserve division three.

The Lakesiders appeared to be in trouble after being dismissed for 85, Lewis top scoring with 26, but they then skittled their opponents for 36, with Lewis leading the way with terrific figures of 5-9 from 10 overs. Mike Lewis also weighed in with 3-16.

FRANKTON succumbed by 76 runs to

Reman in the premier division, being sent back for 127 in reply to 204.

Stuart Lammie, with 5-68, did his best to restrict Reman with Jordan Parry also taking 3-32, but the batsman toiled in reply, with Jason Brookes top scoring on 30 and opener Dave Powell making 28, before both were dismissed by Dominic Bradburne (5-44).

One of the most exciting games of the day saw KNOCKIN & KINNERLEY edged out by one run to Pontesbury in division one.

Hugh Morris took 5-35 off 14.4 overs as Pontesbury were sent back for 138, but Knockin came agonisingly close in a tense finish, being bowled out for 137 in the 40th over.

Prospects had looked bleak when they slumped to 62-5 but opener Richard Williams hit 75 to give his side a shout.

Cricketers edged out after failing short in run chase

A SUPERB innings by Worcestershire star Tom Fell proved the difference between the sides as Oswestry's cricketers suffered a narrow 20-run defeat at Wolverhampton in the Birmingham League division one.

Fell's hard-hitting 64 helped the home side to 177-8 in their 50 overs – a total which was ultimately too many for Mark Robinson's side.

Wolverhampton won the toss and batted, and soon had Karl Quiney trapped lbw for a duck by the impressive Paul Robinson.

Fell and Saif Bhojani then put together the game's decisive partnership, taking the score to 94 before both were dismissed by Warrick Fynn's left-arm spin.

Home skipper Simon Lyett added 37, but the rest of the home batting fell apart, and Oswestry must have been more than happy at the break.

Fynn, whose bowling has been superb so far this season, finished with 3-24, and Paul Robinson 2-24 off their 10 overs.

The way Oswestry openers Fynn and Alex Huxley set about the Wolverhampton attack, an away win looked very much on the cards.

Worcestershire pace ace Chris Russell failed to make a breakthrough as Fynn and Huxley took the score to 59 without loss.

At that moment it all fell apart for Oswestry as Fynn, Huxley, Joe Clarke and Darren Papier were all dismissed in the space of 13 runs.

Robbie Clarke (27) and Scott Hale (13) put on 40 for the fifth wicket, but

CRICKET

By John Bridgwater



Oswestry were always falling further behind the required rate.

Two cameo innings at the end by Josh Coleridge, who hit Russell back over his head for four on his way to 14 not out, and Sam Huxley (13no) took the final total to 157-8.

"Although losing by just 20 runs to Wolverhampton is by no means a disgrace, it was a game we could and should have won," said Oswestry club captain Mike Robinson.

"We had two or three short spells where we played poor cricket, and that's what cost us the game."

Experienced duo Steve Humphreys and Ian Davies were both in fine form as

OSWESTRY II beat Fordhouses by 37 runs in the Second North 2nd XI division at Morda Road.

Humphreys made 61 to help the home side to 175 all out, receiving good support from in-form Josh Kirk (35) and skipper Alex Davidson (20).

Former first-team skipper Davies then ripped through the Fordhouses batting, taking 6-17 as the visitors were sent packing for 138.

Owen Aspinall bowled another impressive spell, taking 2-20.

Oswestry III took a weakened side to Prees in division three of the Shropshire League, and were on the wrong end of a ten-wicket hammering.

After being asked to bat first, Oswestry scored 121-9 in 33 overs, but this was no match for the Prees opening pair, as they went about the run chasing in fine style. They eventually reached their target with 22 overs gone.

Oswestry IV also suffered a crushing defeat, going down by 149 runs to Albrighton II at Morda Road in the reserve division three on Sunday.

Mark Stevens (72) led the way as the visitors reached 220-4 in their 40 overs, with youngster Matthew Davies picking up his first ever league wicket.

Stevens completed a good day by taking 4-16 as Oswestry were bowled out for 71, with only Alex Ramsey (22) and Naomi Payne (13) reaching double figures.

■ Oswestry will look to get back on the winning trail this Saturday when they take on Wombourne at Morda Road. The Seconds visit Wombourne.

Oswestry IV visit Broseley Seconds, while the third team will play Wroxeter Grove II at Morda Road on Sunday.

Pony club members riding high



A TEAM of five young riders from Oswestry and Ellesmere saw off stiff competition to win a Pony Club show jumping challenge at Wheatland Hunt.

Sian (9) and Thomas (11) Evans from Chirk, Oliver Griffiths (11) from Aston, Harriet Otter (10) from Ellesmere and Charlotte Davies (13) from Dudleston Heath all rode spectacular double clear rounds to win. The team also came runners-up in a second class, with Thomas scooping the individual winner's title.

Pictured from left, above: Harriet Otter, Thomas Evans, Oliver Griffiths and Sian Evans. The Oswestry team are all members of the Berwyn and Dee Pony Club.



Calum Jones at the under-15 Scottish Exiles rugby festival in Leamington Spa

Calum's Scots chance

OSWESTRY School pupil Calum Jones, who is from the Welshpool area, has been selected to play in the Scottish Exiles Regional Development Group.

The Year 10 student made his mark after being invited to attend a Scottish Rugby Regional Festival at Old Leamingtons, Leamington Spa.

The festival was for invited under-15-17 players who are recognised as being of higher standard than county rugby.

The young players had an opportunity to showcase their abilities prior to next season's under-16 Pathway Programme which is the lead-up to Scotland selection.

Calum said, "I really enjoyed the game

time and being given the chance to show what I was capable of."

The day included revision techniques, which are the key building blocks of individual performance.

Players were also given the opportunity to demonstrate game format ability and progression; individual games were played in each age group.

Calum, who plays in a variety of positions in the back-line, was also required to play out of position so that all participants received the maximum game time.

Competition for involvement in the Exile programme is strong and Calum, whose Scottish parentage qualifies him for eligibility, relished the occasion.

Ifton back with a win – but it's oh so close

AFTER being frustrated by the wet weather, the previous week, Ifton's bowlers returned to action in the Flowfit Shropshire Premier Bowls League with a closely fought 8-6 home win over St Georges, taking the points aggregate by just six.

It was nip and tuck throughout with the St Martins side just prevailing 215-209 to edge away from the basement to fourth from bottom, although they do have a game in hand in a tight table that sees just one point separate five teams. They face a tough trip to Newport on Friday night.

Adam Price took the most valuable player honour with a 21-11 success over Ian Gaut, while the biggest winner of the night was Craig Davies who notched a 21-9 win over Gary Cooper.

Megis Phillips and Gerwyn Davies both weighed in with 21-14 verdicts, Leighton Roberts won to 17 and Dicky Jones to 18 while Andrew Pearce was piped 21-20 by Glyn Picknell.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Ifton are down to one side on a Friday after withdrawing from the Tanners Shropshire League at the 11th hour.

Ifton were due to start their campaign in division three of the Shrewsbury-based league on Friday away to Prince Social.

But the St Martins club withdrew 24 hours before the fixture, a Tanners league spokesman saying: "With regret Ifton have resigned from the Shropshire League due to a shortage of players."

The resignation leaves division three with just nine teams – and it would have been the same number in division four had Severnside not taken the fixtures vacated by New Hanwood when they withdrew.

Ellesmere out in front after victory

ELLESMERE A kept their noses ahead at the top of the Oswestry and District Bowls League division three with an 8-2 (159-109) home win over Ceirig Valley B.

Curtis Metcalfe took the coppers to four, while Ian Metcalfe (21-5) was another single figure winner and team-mate Neil Kershaw won 21-13.

CHURCH C are propping up the table after crashing 10-0 at Whittington B, losing the aggregate by 84 shots, with Brian Blake (21-4) and Andy Cawthray (21-8) two single figure winners for the hosts.

FOX LANE are going well in division four, keeping the pressure on the leaders with a 9-1 (161-109) home success over Llangynog C. Terry Coles (21-5) took the coppers.

Results – Div Two: Black Lion 6 Ye Olde Crofte 4 (141-129), Criffins 8 Llangynog 4 (155-117).

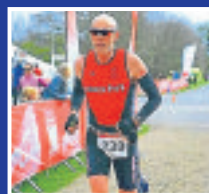
Div three: Chirk 6 B Royston 4 (148-141), Ellesmere A 8 Ceirig Valley B 2 (159-109), Jonestown 7 Whittington 3 (145-138), Plas Kynaston 4 7 Flexsys B 3 (160-132), Whittington B 10 Church C 0 (168-84).

Div Four: Ceirig Valley 10 Bersham 0 (168-117), Corwen 6 4 Overton 6 (123-130), Fox Lane 9 Llangynog C 1 (161-109), Llanyllan 4 2 Ruabon 8 (109-142), Llanyllan 9 9 Llanyllan 9 1 (164-88), Llanyllan 9 9 Rhyn 2 (154-120).

Div Five: Cynwyd 6 C Church 4 E (150-121), Ye Olde Crofte 6 10 W Rhyn 0 (168-92).

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OSWESTRY Sports Desk 01743 283301

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Welshpool cricketers hit road in high spirits

WELSHPOOL'S cricketers head to Forton on Saturday in good spirits after getting their Manby Bowdler Shropshire League division one campaign up and running with a three wicket win over Shelton.

After suffering a 144-run mauling against fancied Market Drayton in their first action, it was the perfect response.

Put in to bat, Shelton posted 184-7 in their 50 overs, with Mat McWhinnie taking 3-60 in 15 overs while Tom Anderson continued his good form with 2-63.

Opener Paul Chapman led the reply with 66 before being run out, Anderson (30) and Rob Pengelly (31) also weighed in before Rupert Shingler's unbeaten 31 saw the home side to their target with four overs left.

After a losing draw against Lilleshall on the opening day, MONTGOMERY suffered their first loss, going down by 105 runs to Broseley, being dismissed for 105 chasing 224-7.

Chris Proctor smashed a superb 158 not out as WELSHPOOL III eased to a 116-run victory over Coum III in division four A.

The opener cracked five sixes and 21 other boundaries in his innings, helping Pool to an imposing 252-8 before dismissing their rivals for 136.

GUILDFIELD's worrying start continued in division four as they crashed by 225-run to Ludlow III.

Half centuries from Craig Massey (64) and Rob Jenner (72) took Ludlow to 275-6 in 40 overs, Rhodri Davies picking up three wickets.

In response, the Guildfield innings folded for just 50, Adam Bowen taking 7-20 and there were six ducks.

Bad injury for Jones

CLUB stalwart Daley Jones suffered a sickening injury in his side's home clash with Bangor to put a downer on Welshpool rugby club's season.

The fly-half was tackled in the 36th minute in Saturday's game and, as his foot got stuck in the ground, badly broke and dislocated his ankle. He was treated on the pitch before undergoing surgery at Shrewsbury Hospital later that night.

After being delayed for more than an hour, the match was abandoned with the players and supporters left visibly upset.

Morda men look to bounce back Llanfair title bid

OSWESTRY look to shrug off of their first defeat of the season when they host Wombourne on Saturday in what is already shaping up to be a keenly contested division one of the Birmingham Cricket League.

After their opening day win against Barnards Green, the Morda Road men succumbed to a narrow 20-run loss at Wolverhampton despite looking well placed for a win that would have taken them 15 points clear.

Remarkably, just one point separates the top nine sides after the four teams who all won on the first day suffered defeats last weekend.

Oswestry were left kicking themselves as they fell short at Wolver-

hampton. Chasing 177-8 in their 50 overs, openers Warrick Fynn and Alex Huxley rattled up 59 without loss, before the reply wobbled with four wickets falling in the space of 13 runs.

Despite some useful contributions down the order, the target proved too much with the visitors finishing on 157-8 in reply, leaving them with just four points.

"We felt it was a game we should have won," said captain Mark Robinson. "We played a lot of good cricket, but let them get away a bit and should have kept them down to around 150."

"After making a good start chasing, we lost some key wickets. We were

a little bit naive and went into our shells, and in the end the run rate got on top of us.

"But hopefully we can learn from it, and put what we learn into practice on Saturday."

Robinson, however, expects Wombourne to provide testing opposition this weekend.

"They have dropped down from the premier league this season and I expect them to be near the top of this division," he said. "But like last season, a lot of teams are capable of beating each other."

Alun Morris replaces Alex Huxley who misses out after breaking a rib while fielding at Wolverhampton.

BOSS Rhys Stephens says he could not have asked for any more from his Llanfair United side after taking the Spar Mid Wales League division one title chase into the last day of the season.

United kept alive their challenge with a 1-0 win over Carno before Llandrindod Wells returned to the summit by one point with a 3-2 Bank Holiday success at Berriew.

It means that the destiny of the title will be decided in the final run of games on Saturday, with Llandod needing to defeat visitors Montgomery to make sure of the crown while Llanfair, who host relegated Builth Wells, will be ready to pounce should they slip up.

"It's still in their hands, but we could not have done any more," said Stephens. "We've given ourselves a chance."

Whatever happens in the league, Llanfair still have plenty to play for as they are in the final of the Central Wales Cup on Wednesday, May 14 at Newtown's Latham Park when they will meet either Berriew or Knighton Town.

Church win a nail-biter by just two at Flexsys

CHURCH A continued their fine start to the Oswestry and District Bowls League division one with a 6-4 success at Flexsys A - making it three wins out of four.

There was little between the sides, with Church taking the aggregate by just two shots, 139-137, with Ade Humphreys leading the way to eight for his fourth win of the campaign.

LLANYMYNECH A remain bottom after falling to an 8-2 loss (43 shots) at Johnstown B, their fourth defeat of the season.

On loan Roy Pulford was the best of the replies with 21-13, Henry Pugh also edging a 21-20 victory.

CRIFTINS A are shaping up to be one of the challengers after defeating WHITTINGTON A 7-3 at home to move into second, two points off the lead.

Gary Wilkie (21-8) bagged the home coppers while visiting keeper Aled Davies continued his unbeaten start to 11.

Leaders Johnstown A recorded a 8-2 (148-112) success at Chirk A, while Cynwyd A were 8-2 (158-112) winners over Corwen A.

CRIFTINS C suffered their first defeat of the season in division two when well beaten 9-1 (157-120) at second placed Overton A. Anthony Gillam gaining their consolation to 10.

After three defeats, CHURCH B got their first win on the board when overcoming visiting BLACK LION 7-3 (13 shots, 243-130) but still prop up the second division table.

Merv Weaver led the way with a 21-8 success in the front, while husband and wife Emrys and Glenys Jones also notched good wins to 14 and 13 respectively. Andrew Jones responded to five for the Lion.

WESTON RHYN A saw off GEORGE 6-4 (156-139) with Carron Riley (21-10) taking the coppers.

Fixtures for Tuesday - Div One: Ceiriog Valley A v Johnstown B, Church A v Ruabon A, Flexsys A v Chirk A, Johnstown A v Cynwyd A, Llanymynech A v Criftins A, Whittington A v Corwen A. Div two: Criftins B v Overton A, George v Llanyngrog A, Llanrhadr A v Church B, Wednesday - Div two: Black Lion v Llangoilan A, Criftins C v Ye Olde Crofte A, Johnstown C v Weston Rhyon A.

FINLEY BOOST FOR DOUBLE WINNERS

In the wake of lifting the Welsh Cup, The New Saints have been handed a further boost with highly rated midfielder Sam Finley signing a new two-year deal with the double winners.

As the players embark on a month's break before returning to training ahead of the Champions League qualifier in July, just a couple of contracts are still to be finalised.

Certainly staying is Finley, with the former Everton academy and Southport midfielder putting pen to paper for another two years after joining TNS from Warrington back in February 2012.

The 21-year-old has been watched by a number of Football League scouts and has recently been on trial with a Championship club. He was named in the Welsh Premier team of the season which was voted for by rival managers.

Awards

"We're delighted that Sam is staying with us as he is a young lad who has attracted the interest of a lot of clubs," said head coach Carl Darlington.

"He's a terrific talent, and one for the future. He had a great season for us which was shown by the fact that he walked away with three awards in the end of season presentation."

Finley won the young player of the year accolade, the players' player and the supporters player

by John
Bridgwater

while manager's player of the season went to Chris Seargeant. Welsh Cup heroes Greg Draper and Mike Wilde shared the top goalscorer awards with 16 goals apiece.

The end of season presentation followed the 3-2 Welsh Cup final victory over Aberystwyth Town, with the Saints completing a domestic double after clinching the Welsh Premier League crown last month.

The league champions have learned they will enter at the second qualifying round stage of the Champions League in mid-July after initially being top seeded in the first qualifying round.

While the change gives them an extra two weeks to prepare, it could cost them earnings from winnings as they would have faced potential beatable opposition from Andorra, Armenia, San Marino or Gibraltar in the first qualifying round.

Now, it is likely that TNS will be on the unseeded side of the draw, with their potential confirmed opponents at this stage being

Super Saints add Welsh Cup to league triumph



We are the champions - The New Saints players and officials celebrate their Welsh Cup final win over Aberystwyth

SPL champions Celtic, Bate Borisov of Belarus, Dinamo Zagreb (Croatia), Sheriff Tiraspol (Moldova), FK Akto-be (Kazakhstan), Ventspils (Latvia) and HJK Helsinki (Finland).

Meanwhile, Darlington admitted The Saints had to dig deep for their Welsh Cup triumph over Aberystwyth Town after being left "shellshocked" in the first

half. A brace from Chris Venables had the Saints staring down the barrel, and a third goal would have surely seen Aber end a 114-year wait to lift the Welsh Cup.

But the full timers rallied in the second half, helped by three substitutions, to overturn the two-goal deficit to run out 3-2 winners.

"You have to credit Aber

for the way they played, they deserved their two-goal lead. We were poor in the first half, but they made us look poor," said Darlington.

"We were shell-shocked, and we can't remember the last time we were two goals down in a game, so it was a phenomenal achievement for us to come back from 2-0 down to win 3-2. It capped a fantastic season.

"We have a strong squad and have game-changers on the bench, and started to pass and move the ball like we know we can."

Five TNS players have been named in the Welsh Premier team of the season - Sam Finley, Mike Wilde, Chris Jones, Kai Edwards and keeper Paul Harrison. Chris Marriott was on the bench.

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